THE

French Convert:

BEING

A True Relation of the happy

CONVERSION

OF

A Noble French Lady,

FROM

The Errors and Superſtitions of *Popery*, to the *Reformed Religion*, by means of a Proteſtant Gardiner Her Servant.

Wherein is ſhewed

Her Great and Unparallell'd Sufferings on the Account of her ſaid Converſion; as alſo her Wonderful Deliverance from two Aſſaſſines hired by a Popiſh Prieſt to Murther her: And of her Miraculous Preſervation in a Wood for Two Years; and how ſhe was at laſt Providentially found by her Husband, who (together with her Parents) was brought over by her Means to the Embracing of the True Religion, as were divers others alſo.

To which is added,

A Brief Account of the preſent Severe Perſecutions of the *French Proteſtants*.

The Second Edition.

LONDON, Printed for *John Gwillim*, in *Biſhopſgate-Street*, 1699.

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THE BOOKSELLER TO THE READER.

READER,

I Thought the beſt way to inform you how I came by the Copy of this Surprizing Relation, would be by communicating to you the following Letter, and then you will know as much of it as I do my ſelf:

To Mr. *John Gwillim*, Bookſeller in *Biſhopſgate-Street.*

SIR,

BEing a Native of France *(fled hither for the Cauſe of Gods True Religion) I am altogether Unacquainted with any* Engliſh *Bookſellers; (and yet for ſuch a one I thought the Encloſed Narrative would be moſt proper) I therefore made it my buſineſs to Enquire of my Acquaintance if they knew ſuch a One, who was a Perſon of Integrity, to whom I might communicate the following Copy, in order to have it made Publick; and being informed by ſome of my acquaintance (who it ſeems are your Cuſtomers) that you are a Perſon of that Character, I have herewith ſent you the Copy incloſed, and the Letter of a worthy Miniſter for my Credentials, who ſent it me as a Rare Example of Gods wonderful mercy and Providence, leaving it to my diſcretion, as you will find by his Letter, to Publiſh it openly, or Communicate it to a few in Manuſcript; and*

thinking the former will be moſt for God's Glory, and the good of others, who may by this Example learn to Truſt in God, and keep Cloſe to his Truth and Way, under the greateſt Sufferings and Afflictions, I have made choice thereof. As for the Truth of it, (having received it from ſo Eminent and good a Hand) neither I who know the Perſons Integrity, or any that I have ſhewed it to, have in the leaſt Suſpected that it is otherwiſe.

I need not enter on the Subject Matter, ſince it is before you; but ſubmit it to your Conſideration, whether it will be to your advantage to Print it. If you do, I may in ſome meaſure Promote it among my Friends and Acquaintance: If I hear nothing of it abroad in a convenient time, I muſt rely upon your Honeſty, (and the Character my Friends have given of you) to keep the Copy ſafe, and I will ſend for it by the ſame way it came to your Hands: For the great Love I have for my Friend that ſent it, and ſomething Extraordinary I ſee in it, makes me unwilling to have it Buried in Obliviion,, and therefore will take other meaſures to have it made Publick, in caſe you decline it. So I am thus far your unknown Friend to ſerve you,

R. D.

Having received this Letter, and read the Narrative over, I was ſoon of opinion that it might not only anſwer my Expectation, but (as the Gentleman in his Letter very well obſerves) be of great Uſe to many others. And have therefore made it publick; Not Doubting, Courteous Reader, but thou wilt find it both Pleaſant and Profitable. And ſo without any further Apology Farewel.

J. G.

The

The Copy of a Letter ſent from a French Proteſtant Miniſter in *France*, to his Friend in *London*, with the following Relation.

My very good Friend,

HAving Received yours the 13th *of* April, *N. S. I was not a little over-joyed, even in my Sufferings, to hear you are well Settled in a Country where you have the freedom of Enjoying the Excerciſe of the* True Religion, *a thing to be valued above all other Earthly Bleſſings; and next to that, I am much Gladed to find you inform me that the Climate ſo well agrees with you and your Family, that you have been Healthful ever ſince you departed from me, and the reſt of your dear Friends here; tho' many of us, and particularly my ſelf, labour under many Sufferings and Afflictions; I having (with many others) Languiſh'd a long time in Priſon, for the ſake of a Good Conſcience afflicted with much Sickneſs: by reaſon of my cloſe confinement, which (Bleſſed be the Name of God enabling me) I have born with Patience: Tho' many have Dyed unpitied of their cruel Perſecutors, yet the cry of Innocent Blood may in time make them know* How hard it is to Kick againſt the Pricks; *Yet my Prayers are, That inſtead of ſending any fearful Judgment on theſe* Popiſh Adverſaries, *God would turn their Hearts, enlighten their Underſtandings, make them ſee the Error of their Ways, and Repent of the many Evils they have done to the* Poor Proteſtants, *without any manner of Cauſe or Provocation; to whom their Rage and Malice extends even beyond Death, for they ſtill continue the old way of denying them* Chriſtian Burial. *But this is all our Comforts,* It matters not where our Bodies lye, ſo

be it our Souls are infolded in Christ's Arms. *Yet among the Miseries and Threats of Death, which I have undergon in taking care of the Spiritual Welfare of those that God has committed to my Charge, I cannot but be greatly Comforted when you tell me, the* French Protestant Church *in* England *flourishes: and that the Members of it* Walk worthy of their Calling, *gaining by their inoffensive way of Living, a good repute among Strangers; when in their Native Country so much Inhumanity appears towards these of the* Reformed Profession; *for the* Persecution *in many Places rages still by their Impoverishing of Thousands of Families. But not to be tedious to you, having nothing left to send you but my good wishes and Prayers, except the enclosed Account of a very strange but Blessed alteration in the Family of the Count* Alanson, *a worthy Noble Man, well known to you; I have drawn it up, upon the strictest Enquiry into the Truth of all the Material Circumstances, as well as my Sufferings, and spare time for the Care of those under my Charge, would permit; and send it to you as a Token of my Love for the many Kindnesses I have received at your Hands; that so you might Communicate it to others, and make it publick if you see occasion; that all may be made sensible* of the wonderful Goodness of Almighty God, and Praise him for the Works he doth among the Children of Men. *For the certainty of what I have Written, though I have been obliged for Methods-sake to use a few Expressions of my own, you may firmly rely on my Integrity; who am always a well wisher to the Health of your Soul and Body.*

A. D' Auborn.

THE French Convert, &c.

IN Writing of the following Relation, wherein Injur'd Innocence and Oppreſſed Vertue does ſo Eminently Triumph over all the Rage and Malice both of Men and Devils, I ſhall not ſtudy to adorn my Stile with Flowers of Rhetorick, but lead the Reader by the Clue of Truth into the adorable Myſteries of Divine Providence; which are here diſplay'd in ſuch a Series of Wonders, as can ſcarce be Parallell'd. As an Introduction to which, I will a little conſider how the Divine Goodneſs delights to bring Light out of Darkneſs, and makes even the Wicked Confound themſelves in their own devices, that out of their evil deſigns he may bring good to paſs. For as *Joſeph*'s being Sold into *Egypt*, and there falſly accuſed of Adultry, advanced him next to a Throne, and turned to the Shame of his accuſing Miſtreſs and Treacherous Brethren; though at the beginning God meant it for good, that he might be Inſtrumental to preſerve his Father and his Houſhold alive, and turned the Mallice of the *Patriarchs* into a Bleſſing: So the Miſeries and Extraordinary Sufferings of the Noble Lady, whoſe Story I am going to recite, was made uſe of by Divine Providence, as a means of the Converſion of her Husband, Parents, and many others, to the *True Religion*; which as ſhe has often ſaid ſince, has been a very ample, and glorious Recompence. But I ſhalll not anti-

cipate

cipate what with more Satisfaction you will find in the Relation it ſelf; which take as follows.

In *Britanny*, one of the faireſt Provinces of *France*, there lately liv'd *Alanſon*, a Perſon of Noble Extraction, and of an Eſtate ſuitable to the Greatneſs of his Birth, and thoſe Noble Qualities that Enrich'd his Mind: Who being a Lover of Military Actions, was eaſily perſwaded to ſerve his King in the Wars, where having an Eminent Command given him, he behav'd himſelf with that Bravery as gain'd him the Admiration of his Enemies, the Love of his Friends, and freſh Honours from his King, who took particular notice of his great Performances. But in the Intervals of two or three Compaigns, he caſt his Eyes upon one *Deidamia*, a young Lady of Quality, not inferiour to himſelf for Birth, whoſe Beauty and Vertue were equally attractive: To her he made his Addreſſes; and the Equality of their Birth, and the ſuitableneſs of their Diſpoſitions, made his Conqueſt the more Eaſie; ſo that in a little time they were Contracted and Married, to their mutual Joy and Satisfaction.

This happy Couple having for a whole Winter Enjoyed the Bleſſing of each others mutual Loves and Endeared Affections, without the leaſt umbrage of any interpoſing Cloud that might give an Allay to their Happineſs; at length the Spring came on, and the Armies gathering together, Summon'd *Alanſon* from the Repoſe he took in the ſoft Embraces of his Chaſte and Loving Wife, to the field of War, to act his part again upon that Stage of Honour, wherein he had already acquir'd ſo much Reputation: But he never ſeemed ſo unwilling

unwilling to Court Fame abroad as now, ſince he muſt of neceſſity leave behind him the Deareſt part of himſelf; he had many ſtruglings and combates in his Mind, which ſeem'd to be divided between Love and Honour; he was loth to leave his Lady, and yet unwilling to have his Reputation ſully'd: And theſe different Paſſions in his Mind, caus'd ſuch an Alteration in his Countenance, that it was taken Notice of by his Lady; who not knowing the Cauſe, was the more troubled at it. And therefore following him one day into the Garden, (whither he had retir'd to Conſider with with himſelf what he had beſt to do) ſhe earneſtly preſt him to let her know what it was that troubled him; for ſhe had for ſome time, ſhe ſaid, obſerv'd he was diſquieted, but cou'd not tell at what; and ſhe was fearful ſhe might ſome way (tho' ſhe knew it not) be the occaſion of it; adding, *Command me any thing a Wife can juſtly do, and I am all obedience.* This tender Carriage of his Lady, added freſh fewel to the fire of his affliction, and made him ſtill far more unwilling to leave her: Wherefore Cauſing her to ſit down by him, he told her ſhe was indeed the innocent Occaſion of his trouble; for her great Love and Tenderneſs to him, had ſo Engag'd his heart to her in a reciprocal affection, that he knew not how to think of leaving her, tho' Honour loudly call'd him to the Field: His Lady, when he talk'd of leaving her, was hardly kept from Swooning in his Arms, and cou'd not forbear ſaying, *What! Muſt we part then! Ah! Wretched* Deidamia! and ſtraightways fell a Weeping: Her Tears did ſo prevail upon the Count, that Love had now obtain'd an intire Victory; and he Reſolv'd

ſolv'd to ſtay at home with *Deidamia*; and there fore intreated her to dry up her Tears and be Comforted; for he had now come to a Reſolution rather to undergo ſome hard Cenſures for ſtaying at home, than by his going to the Camp, leave his Dear *Deidamia* diſconſolate. —— Theſe kind Aſſurances her Husband gave her, gave her that ſatisfaction which ſoon ſhew'd it ſelf in a Chearful Countenance. And the Endearing Expreſſions ſhe gave the Count on this Occaſion, made him conclude they both were happy in each others Love. ——

But behold the Inconſtancy of Worldly happineſs, and how little we can promiſe our ſelves of it here! We may indeed both purpoſe and reſolve; but cann't ſecure our ſelves from Diſappointments: The footſteps of Divine Providence are often hard to Trace; hence it is that we are told by the inſpired Penman, That *the Ways of God are in the Deep, and his Paths in the great Waters, and his Footſteps are not known.* And we ſee often, whatever pleaſing Proſpect of Felicity we have in View, one unforeſeen Occaſion, or ſudden Turn of Providence, deſtroys it, and in a Moment, deprives us of that happineſs which we had promis'd to our ſelves for many years: And yet theſe Changes, to thoſe that fear the Lord, are ſo diſpos'd and Order'd by God's Providence, that in the End they Evidently Work together for their good. —— And thus it fell out in the inſtance before us: For whilſt *Alanſon* and his *Deidamia* delighted in each other, and were both happy in their Conjugal Affection, an Accident fell out, that put him under a Neceſſity of going to the Camp; which was,

That

That a Colonels Place in the Regiment of *Picardy* being Vacant, a Relation of *Alanſon*'s at Court, out of a too Officious Kindneſs, put the King in mind of the good Services of *Alanſon*, and deſir'd his Majeſty to beſtow that Vacancy upon him: To which his Majeſty (being ſenſible of his former bravery and good Service) readily Conſented, and order'd his Commiſſion to be ſent him, which was done accordingly; When *Alanſon* receiv'd this Commiſſion from the Purſevant who brought it, he gave him a generous Reward for his Pains, but was not very well pleas'd neither with the New Honour his Majeſty had given him, nor with his Kinſmans too Officious Kindneſs in procuring it; becauſe it put him under a Neceſſity of parting from his Lady, which gave him a very ſenſible diſpleaſure: But knowing that by this Commiſſion he was Engag'd too far for a Retreat, his Care was how to make his *Deidamia* as Eaſie as he cou'd; and therefore calling her to take a Turn with him in the Garden, and leading her into an Arbour cover'd with *Jeſſamine*, he thus began to tell her the Unwelcome News that had been brought him, *My deareſt* Deidamia, *let me conjure you not to be Troubled at what I am going now to tell you, but if you will oblige me, do it by ſhewing your Reſolution and Fortitude of Mind; and yet I cann't but own, That our Reſolves, like little heaps of Sand, are quickly brought to nothing; but the Decrees of Heaven, like the Foundations of the Earth, are fix'd for ever. 'Twas in this very Arbor, my deareſt* Deidamia, *that I reſolv'd to ſtay at Home with thee, and not return to the Campaign in* Flanders; *and I appeal to him who knows my heart, how firmly I intended it; but ſee here, how I am forc'd againſt my*

Will

Will to break my Reſolutions; (and with that, he ſhew'd her the Commiſſion the King had ſent him to be Colonel of the Rigment of *Picardy*) *and now you ſee my* Deidamia *the Neceſſity that lies upon me to leave you for a time; but tho' our Bodies be divided, we will have yet one Soul, and Love, whilſt Providence denies us to live together. And whilſt I in the Field am fighting for my Country, you ſhall ſtay here, and Pray for my Succeſs: And if it pleaſes God that I return, (which I don't doubt at all, for Heav'n I'm ſure will hear your fervent Prayers) twill be a New addition to my Joy, to lay thoſe Lawrels I ſhall win in Battel at* Deidamia's *Feet.* Poor *Deidamia* heard this heavy News with a ſad heart, but anſwer'd with a Piety and Prudence Worthy of her ſelf, That ſince what happen'd was not of his ſeeking, but what the Providence of God had call'd him to, ſhe thought it was her Duty, tho ſhe cou'd hardly do't without reluctancy, to acquieſce in the Divine Diſpoſal of all humane Actions, and wou'd Endeavour to ſtifle her Reſentments, rather than give him any further Trouble. *Alanſon* being no leſs pleas'd with *Deidamia's* Prudence than her kind Affection, which he expreſs'd by ſeveral Tender things he told her, apply'd himſelf to the getting ready of his Equipage, in order to his departure; and the Settling the Affairs of his Family. Ordering *Antonio* his Chaplain, who was a *Fryar* of the Order of St. *Francis*, to ſay a ſolemn maſs for his Succeſs in the Field, and the Protection of his Lady and Family in his Abſence: Recommending his deareſt *Deidamia* to the Care of *Antonio* his Chaplain, and *Fronovius* the Steward of his Houſhold, in theſe Words, *To your Care in my abſence, I recommend*

recommed the Safty and Welfare of my beloved Lady, the moſt vertuous and loving of Wives; and Charge you, as you expect to Anſwer it to God and me, be Obedient to all her Commands, Comfort and Cheriſh her in her Solitude, and ſee that all my Domeſtick pay the like exact Reſpects. This and much more they faithfully promiſed to obſerve. Then giving Liberally to each Servant, and having notice that his Equipage was ready, and divers Gentlemen on Horſeback waited to accompany him, he took his Solemn leave of his dear *Deidamia*, whoſe ſad preſaging heart was overcome with grief to that degree, that ſhe could only ſpeak theſe few Prophetick Words, *Ah! my Dear Lord! may Heaven prevent my Fears! But my poor Heart fore-bodes that this will be a long and fatal Parting?* To which the the Count reply'd, Do not caſt down thy ſelf, dear *Deidamia*, by the indulging of ſuch Melancholly Fancies; but aſſure your ſelf, I'll haſten my return as much as poſſible, and I will ſend to you as often as I can. And in the Mean-time ſhall commit you to the Protection of the Almighty, the bleſſed Virgin Mother, and all the holy Saints and Angels; and ſo Embracing of her in his Arms, and Sealing his Affections on her Lips with gentle Kiſſes, he took his leave of her, and rid away; not thinking he had left an Innocent Dove to the Protection of two Ravenous Vultures.

It is not much to my Purpoſe to tell you how well he was received at the Head of his Command, by the Duke of *Luxemburge*, or what brave Exploits his Courage carryed him through, ſince neither Fame, nor the Publick News from *Paris*, have been wanting to ſpeak his Commendation: I therefore

omit it, (unleſs in ſome Paſſages, where it will in the Thred of this amazing Relation, be neceſſary to mention ſome Particulars) and ſhall continue with the ſorrowful *Deidamia*, who after his Departure, ſeemed to have baniſhed all Comfort from her Breaſt; all that ſhe found was in her Devotions and Prayers to Almighty God, for his Protection and ſafe Return, greatly affecting Solitude; and, as much as ſhe could, avoided the Viſits of divers Ladies who (as they ſaid) came to make her Merry, and divert her Melancholly, ſhe being very well *Beloved*, both by the Nobility and *Gentry*, for her *comely Carriage*, *modeſt Behaviour*, *ſweetneſs* of *Temper*, and *Affability*.

In the cool of the Day ſhe uſually made it her Buſineſs to retire into her Garden, Penſive and alone; it being by the care and Diligence of the Gardener, kept and ordered like another *Paradiſe*, ſtored with great Variety of choice Plants and Flowers, adorned with pleaſant Fountains and ſeveral delightful Arbours, ſhaded over with Inter-twining Jeſſamine, in one of which ſhe and her abſent Lord, had paſſed ſome Joyful, as well as Sad Hours, and at the Remembrance of them would ſadly Weep, then Pray (according to the Cuſtom of the *Papiſts*, who allow praying to Saints) to the Tutelary Saints for his Protection. And ſo drying up her Tears, would walk thence again, taking but little Reſt in any place: But one time paſſing by a bed of Tulips, ſhe eſpyed *Bernard* her Gardener (for ſo was he called) buſie in Watering them, and erecting ſuch as declin'd their drooping Heads, occaſioned by the heat of the

the Sun's too ſcorching Beams; ſhe had often in this Man obſerved a harmleſs Native Innocence, accompanyed with Acute Ingenuity, (and indeed, a Gardener, who underſtands his Buſineſs as he ought to do, muſt be an ingenious Man) and therefore imagined it might adminiſter to her ſome Advantage to hold diſcourſe with him, in what related to the Myſtery of Gardening, thinking it no Undervaluing, tho' he was her menial Servant; ſince ſhe had often Read that *Kings, Princes, and other great and wiſe Men, had Voluntarily become of this Occupation: That* Adam, *when Governour of all the World, was imployed in it by God himſelf*; ſo that comming cloſe to him whilſt his Hands were buſied at his Work; the Man by his Ear (his Back being towards her) being informed of ſome Bodys approach, ſuddenly ſtarted up, and ſeeing his beautiful Lady ſo near him, was a little ſurpriz'd, and would have retir'd to give her the more freedom in her Walks; but ſhe prevented him, by ſaying, *Bernard, Pray don't let me hinder you in your Buſineſs; I came on purpoſe to obſerve your Dexterity in Gardening: I ſee you mind it with a juſt Diligence, though your Lord is abſent; Madam,* (Replyed he) *I beg your Ladiſhips Pardon if I tell you I am no Eye-Servant, as well knowing I muſt give an Account to God, as well as to Man, if I am Negligent in what I promiſe to Perform, and am Intruſted with.* Deidamia ſtood ſurpriz'd at the Mans plain, but ingenuous Reply; and changing ſomewhat the manner of her Diſcourſe, asked him divers Queſtions about the *Virtues, Nature, Quality* and *Production* of *Flowers* and *Plants*, &c. In all which he ſatisfied her to her admiration; by which ſhe perceived him

better Learned in the Myſteries of Nature, than ſhe expected from one of his Profeſſion. And to be brief, ſhe often held ſuch innocent Converſation with him when at any time ſhe found him buſied in the Garden; being much delighted to hear him diſcourſe how much of the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God might be learn'd from the Works of Creation; for he had a peculiar faculty of Spiritualizing his Employment; and making his Buſineſs ſerve, like *Jacob's* Ladder, to carry him from Earth to Heaven. Which ſometimes caus'd her to reflect, That this Man, was ſomething more than he appeared to be, (in which indeed ſhe was not much miſtaken) So that entertaining a good Opinion of him, ſhe order'd his Lodging to be chang'd for a better; and his courſe and homely Commons to be Enlarg'd, above what was uſual to thoſe of his Profeſſion and Degree.

But now *Antonio* the Chaplain, (However he had appear'd like a Saint to his Maſter, began to ſhow himſelf a Devil to his Miſtreſs, & too plainly ſhew'd his cloven foot) for tho' above Fifty Years of Age, he had for ſome time harbor'd luſtful deſires towards the fair and Ecauteous *Deidamia*, that he was now reſolv'd to attempt her Chaſtity: And tho' her Vertue and her ſpotleſs Chaſtity might very well have kept him from purſuing his unclean deſires, yet he flatter'd himſelf with hopes of obtaining his End by corrupting her Judgment: In which he found himſelf very much miſtaken, as the Sequel will declare. For the Divine Goodneſs had a further Work to do for *Deidamia*; who being altogether ignorant of what this Wretch deſign'd againſt her Honour, frequented her beloved Garden, as ſhe us'd to do:

and

and one Evening, hearing the Gardener reading in a lonely Arbour where he thought himself secure (for he had industriously conceal'd his being a Protestant, from any of the Family) her Curiosity to hear him, made her draw nigh so softly that he could not hear her: He was then reading the first Chapter of the Epistle to the *Romans*, from the 20th to the End of the 23th Verse, *Viz. For the invisible things of him from the Creation of the World, are clearly seen, being understood by the Things that are made, even his Eternal Power and God-head; so that they are without excuse, because that when they knew God, they Glorified him not as God, neither were Thankful, but became vain in their Imaginations, and their foolish Hearts were Darkned: Professing themselves to be wise, they became Fools; and changed the Glory of the incorruptible God, into an Image made like to Corruptible Man, and to Birds, and four-footed Beasts, and creeping Things.*

Having thus far Proceeded, he Paused, and with Eyes lifted up to Heaven, gave Glory unto God, That he had preserved him Blameless from these Offences against his Divine Majesty, which through Ignorance and Superstition had over-spread the greatest part of *Europe*: *O Lord*, continued he, *I humbly beseech thee, as I have already suffered Persecution for thy Names Sake, and for the Sake of a good Conscience, so never let me Depart from the Ways of thy Truth, to change thy Incorruptible Glory into an Image made like Corruptible Man*: And when he had said This, Tears stood in his Eyes, and his Words were succeeded by Sighs, and then by Silence.

Deidamia, who had all this while attentively

Liſtened, found ſomething in her Mind, that made a ſuddain uneaſy Alteration, and thought to have gone away Undiſcovered; but then again, her Zeal for the *Romiſh* Religion, which ſhe thought he had Reproached, by deteſting *Image*-Worſhip, carryed her ſo far, as ſhe reſolved to give him a ſharp Reprimand; leaſt he, perſiſting further, until diſcovered by others, might Ruin himſelf, tho' her Goodneſs and gentle Nature was not for working him any Injury by revealing it. But never was Man more Surpriz'd than *Bernard*, when he ſaw her, whom at that time of Day he little Suſpected, as not being Uſual; yet collecting his ſcattered Senſes, he aroſe from his Seat, and withall endeavoured to hide his *Bible* under his Coat, thinking ſhe had been newly come, and might neither have heard him Read, nor ſeen his *Bible*. But ſhe in a frowning manner, contrary to the wonted ſweetneſs of her Temper, Commanded him to Deliver it to her, that the Flames might conceal his Fault; and told him ſhe would not, for that time, diſcover his being converſant with a Book ſo ſtrictly by the *Church* Prohibited to the *Layety*; For, *continued ſhe*, it is enough that *we* Believe as the *Church* Believes, without further Diſpute, or puzling our ſelves with thoſe Scruples and Niceties, which in all probability we may make a falſe Conſtruction of, and wreſt even thoſe Scriptures that are the Rule of our Faith, to our own Damnation.

This ſmart Diſcourſe, and the Frowns in the Fair *Deidamia*'s Countenance, did not in this Caſe ſo much daunt *Bernard*, as in another of leſs Concern it might have done; but with ſome aſſurance he Reply'd, Ah Madam! I little thought of being

Surpriz'd

Surpriz'd by you at my Devotions; but ſince I am, I cannot grant what you demand; rather you may Command my Body to the Flames, and as a willing Martyr I will ſooner go, than tamely betray the Cauſe of God, in delivering up his holy Word to be Conſumed, in which is contained all things neceſſary to Salvation; and it would be in me an apparent Contempt of that Salvation, ſhould I voluntarily, or through fear, caſt it from me. As to your ſaying, *Madam*, That the *Church* has prohibited the *Layety* the uſe of this Sacred *Book*, eſpecially in a known Tongue, I readily Grant it; but, O moſt Vertuous Lady, you little know their Policy in that, it is not that they fear or care what miſ-Conſtructions men make of it; but becauſe it is, like Arrows in the hand of a Giant, ſtrong againſt their Worldly Intereſt, plainly diſcovering their Errors, groſs Idolatries, —— He would have proceeded, but heat of Zeal prompted her haſtily to Interrupt him, ſaying, Surely, *Bernard*, you are Diſtracted; or elſe, what's worſe, a *Heretick*: I took you to be Wiſer and more Reaſonable when I diſcours'd you the other Day. Truly, *Madam*, replyed he, As for my being in my right Senſes, I bleſs Almighty God, he has in his Mercy hitherto continued them to me; and for my being a *Heretick*, Pardon me, if St. *Paul* anſwers for me, when he was Accus'd before *Fœlix*, ſaying, *But this I confeſs unto thee, After the way which they call Hereſie, ſo Worſhip I the God of my Fathers; believing all things that are Written in the Law and the Prophets.* Upon this, *Deidamia*, who by Nature was all Goodneſs, Gentleneſs, and Affableneſs, began to moderate her Anger, and to conſider a little what he had ſaid;

yet

yet her Zeal for the Religion ſhe profeſſed, made her mildly Rebuke him, and lay before him the Danger he was in, if his Opinion was diſcovered; bidding him be Cautious and Wiſe in what he did; though for her Part he need not fear but ſhe would lock up what ſhe had Diſcovered, in her Breaſt, and it ſhould paſs no further; and ſo departing, left him in ſome Confuſion.

Deidamia retiring to her Chamber, began to Conſider on what had Paſſed, and remembred ſhe had often Wept in her tender Years, when ſhe heard the Cruelties the *Roman-Catholicks* uſed towards the *Hugonots*, or *Proteſtants*, in *France*; and diſapproved of their Perſecuting Spirit, as not of God, whoſe chiefeſt Attribute is *Mercy*, tender *Compaſſion*, and *Forgiveneſs*, when on the Contrary, ſhe found thoſe who made Religion ſo much their boaſt, ſo very Cruel, that far from the Inſtance of our Saviour's refuſing to call for Fire from Heaven to Conſume thoſe that had injuriouſly and deſpightfully uſed him, they made their very Worſhip and Devotions a ſnare, to bring thoſe under their cruel Handlings, who had in no wiſe Offended them, but in being ſeparated from them, and moving according to the Dictates of their Conſciences. She had likewiſe Obſerved the Harmleſneſs and Inoffenſive manner of *Living* in the Perſecuted, and often ſhewed ſome Diſlike of the Looſneſs and Unchriſtian Practices of the Perſecutors; ſo that although ſhe had a good Opinion of the *Romiſh* Religion, as having been brought up in it from her Infancy, yet had ſhe not ſo of many of the Profeſſors of it, who apparently Derogated from the ways of Vertue, and ſeemed to Encourage Vice.

This

This wrought ſome Labourings in her Mind, through the Gracious Operation of the Holy Spirit; and in her Night-Thoughts more Seriouſly reflecting on many Things, and Particularly on the Gardener's Expreſſion out of St. *Paul*'s Words to *Fœlix* the Governour, inferring from thence, That it muſt be the Sincerity of the Heart towards God, more than the ſhew or outward Name, or Profeſſion of any Religion, that renders the Perſon acceptable in his Sight. In the midſt of theſe Cogitations and Debates within her ſelf, ſhe found ſomething (as 'twere by an over-ruling Power) ſtrongly move her to a Deſire of further Converſing with *Bernard*, about the *Fundamentals* of his *Religion*; which by the *Popiſh Prieſts*, as well in their *Pulpits*, as private Converſation, had been repreſented ſo Odious, Damnable, and to be Deteſted.

The Morning no ſooner ſummon'd the Gardener to Viſit the *Flowers* and *Plants*, & perform his uſual Task in *Watering* and *Ordering* them, but *Deidamia*, who had taken little Reſt that Night, aroſe; and having performed her Oriſons, and then refreſhing her ſelf with a moderate Refection, took an Opportunity between that and Dinner-time to enter the Garden privately, at a Door that opened into it from her Apartment; and to Screen the better what ſhe intended, from prying Eyes, took divers turns, and Gathered *Poſies* of *Flowers*, and then Fanning her ſelf, as if the Heat offended her, paſſing many Winding Alleys, over-ſpread with pleaſant Shades, ſhe came to the before-mentioned Arbour, and again ſurprized the Gardener in his Meditations: The Man was not under any Conſternation at her coming, but riſing and Bowing low, would

would have Departed, out of good manners to give her the ſole Freedom of that pleaſant Bower; but ſhe laid her Commands on him to ſtay, ſaying, She had conſidered of his former Diſcourſe, & had made it her Buſineſs to find him out, that he might give her ſome better Reaſon for the Opinion he held, than yet he had done.

His Modeſty, and the humble Thoughts he conceiv'd of himſelf, would ſcarce give him leave to ſit down, thongh ſhe often Commanded him ſo to do; but at laſt he Complyed, and then ſhe asked him. *Upon what Ground and Foundation the Baſis of his Religion was fixed?*

Gardener. It is Founded on the Scriptures of the Old and New *Teſtament*, which were Written by Men, inſpired by the Holy Ghoſt, and given for our Inſtruction and Learning; it is only the Word of God that can Warrant the Truth of any Profeſſion in Religious Matters; and that we *Proteſtants* (through God's Aſſiſtance) Labour to Conform, and Live up to.

Deidamia. *Ay, but you may be Miſtaken in the miſinterpreting the Scriptures, and ſo fall into groſs Hereſies, as our Church charges you; and therefore has ſtrictly Forbid the Layety of our Communion to meddle with them, leaſt like Weapons put into the Hands of Idiots, or Madmen, they injure themſelves and others thereby.*

Gard. Ah Lady, ſhall I be free, and deal Plainly with you in this Point?

Dei. *With all my Heart, let me Hear what you can ſay in Anſwer to it?*

Gard. All Scriptures are given for our Learning; God is willing we ſhould know his revealed Will, that we may be the better Enabled to perform it.

St.

St. *Paul* commends the *Bereans*, & calls them Noble, becauſe they ſearched the Scriptures, to ſee whether the things they heard were ſo or no; and we have many Commands for this; as, *Seek ye the Book of the Lord and Read*, Iſa. 34. 16. *They were more Noble, in that they ſearched the Scriptures daily*, Acts 17. 11. *Let the Word of God dwell richly in you*, Colloſſ. 3. 16. *From a Child thou haſt known the Scriptures*, 2 Tim. 3. 15. *Take the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God*, Eph. 6. 17. And many others that I might mention which are to be found in the Scriptures; and this not commanded to *Some*, but to *All* that ſeek Salvation.

Dei. *Certainly if our Church had ſeen this fit, they would not have denyed it; but being Dangerous to Souls, it ought to be Reſtrained.*

Gard. It is indeed Dangerous to break God's Commandments, and to teach Men ſo to do, and to make the Word of God of none Effect by Humane Tradition. We know the Woes Chriſt pronounced againſt the *Phariſees* for theſe things.

Dei. *Why who are Guilty of this? The Church of* Rome, *the Holy Catholick Church, as it has many Ages been Stiled, is ſurely Unſpotted of ſuch Crimes.*

Gard. I wiſh I could ſay it was not, but it deeply is Guilty, as in many other Particulars, ſo moſt Eminently in this, That it profeſſes no Man is obliged to receive the Scriptures as the Word of God, or to believe any of it, but for the Teſtimony of your Church; and to Awe Men unto ſuch a Belief, threats of Damnation are uſed. As well as the Magiſtrates Swords, and cruel Torments by *Inquiſition*; & indeed it is not done without Ground: This is done to hinder prying in to their groſs Idolatries,

latries, Errors, and Superſtitions, Derogatorie to the Scriptures and expreſs Command of God.

Dei. *Sure you are beſides your ſelf: Nor can you prove this; but being fallen from the Church, do this only in Prejudice and Spight, to lay a Stain upon its Virgin Innocence.*

Gard. No; it is apparent from the Word of God, and even from Reaſon it ſelf, in thoſe that will Conſider, and are not blinded with Ignorance, which your *Church* in her Senſe truly ſtiles the Mother of Devotion.

Dei. *Can any ſuch thing be in a Church that is Infallible? and to prove that it is ſo, it is ſaid to be Built upon St.* Peter; *he is the* Rock *ſpoken of; and this* Rock *doth, together with St.* Peter, *include his Succeſſors; and the Church Built on this* Rock *(that is united to, and built upon the Pope) is Infallible; for it is ſaid,* The Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it.

Gard. Pardon me, Lady, If I ſay There is no Agreement among the Church-Men about this Infallible Judge; ſome will have it the *Pope*, ſome a General Councel, and others both; none of your Writers having yet Concluded on it. However, theſe Words are Perverted, for it is more Probable that not *Peter*'s *Perſon*, but his *Doctrine* or *Confeſſion* concerning *Chriſt*, is the *Rock* upon which the Church is built: Scripture is its beſt Interpreter; it is not *Peter* but *Chriſt* is the Foundation of the Church, as here in my *Bible* you may ſee, by the 28*th* Chap. and 16*th* Verſe of *Iſaiah*, compared with 1 *Pet.* 2. 6, 7, 8. Which you may pleaſe to Read; [*which ſhe did*] It is moreover expreſly ſaid, 1 *Cor.* 3. 11. *Other Foundation can no Man lay, but*

that

that, that is layed, which is Jeſus Chriſt. And this is the more conſiderable, becauſe he ſpeaks againſt thoſe that made the *Apoſtles* to be Foundations, ſaying, *I am of Paul, another of Apollos, or Cephas*; and if this is ſpoke of *Peter*, no more is ſaid of him here, than is ſpoke of all the Prophets and Apoſtles, *Epheſ.* 2. 20. *Ye are built upon the Foundation of the Apoſtles and Prophets.*

Deid. *Well, I am not much Learned in this Myſtery; but, Bray, what as Erronious can you aſſign in our Worſhip, or any other thing the Church holds as abſolutely Neceſſary?*

Gard. The paying Divine Adoration to *Angels*, and *Saints*, expreſly contrary to God's Commands, and Derogatory to his Honour, who alone ought to be Worſhipped in Heaven and Earth; and to Worſhip any other, either Saint or Angel, or any Creature, is Idolatry, and a breach of the Second Commandment.

Deid. *Nay, not too haſty; We do not Worſhip the Angels and Saints as God, with the higheſt Worſhip, which is only Proper to God; but with with an Inferiour kind of Religious Worſhip, that they may Preſent our Supplications to him.*

Gard. There is no Interceſſor or Mediator but Chriſt Jeſus, who is appointed to perform that Office; *If any man want Wiſdom, let him ask of God, James* 1. 5. Neither of Saints, nor Angels. *Come to me*, ſaith our Saviour, *and I will in no wiſe caſt you out.* This free Invitation ſhows us he alone is to receive our Petitions, and preſent them to his Father. There is alſo *Image*-Worſhip brought Cunningly in by *Prieſts*, to gain Worldly Advantage, and pretended Miracles, to draw the Ignorant to

pay their Devotion more at one Place than at another, impoſing on the Ignorant for Lucre ſake. I could ſay much more, but I fear to Offend you.

Deid. *No, you do not: But let us come nearer to the main Controverſie; What think you of Tranſubſtantiation? Is not Chriſt Corporally preſent in the Sacrament?*

Gard. It is a Miſrepreſentation of our Saviour's Words, for if he had ſo meant as the Church of *Rome* holds it, when he brake the Bread he muſt have held himſelf in his own Hands, and Eat himſelf, yet ſtill ſit whole and entire at the Table; his whole Body muſt be in the Mouth of every Communicant at once, and that Body in Millions of Places at a time, broken and unbroken, and be ſubject to Putrifaction; and therefore the Words, *This is my Body*, doth only intend, *This doth ſignifie my Body*; and upon the ſame Account our Saviour is called, a *Door*, a *Rock*, a *Vine*; yet none can be ſo void of Underſtanding, to believe he was turned into any of theſe; and therefore when he brake the Bread, and gave the Cup, he did it only that when Chriſtian Congregations were met on ſolemn Occaſions to Celebrate his Worſhip, they ſhould do it in *Remembrance of him*, till his coming in Glory at the laſt Day, as the immediate Words explain; and it is Abſurd to believe that the *Prieſt*'s uttering a few Words over a Wafer, can make it a God, or that Body offered on the Croſs.

Deid. *You amaze me: But Pray what do you hold about* Purgatory? *Is there ſuch a Place where Souls are to endure their Purgation after Death, that go not immediately to Heaven; and by Maſſes and Prayers, may be releaſed ſooner or later?*

Gard.

Gard. It is a Tradition lately brought in, and with it hath brought much increaſe of Wealth to the Church. The Word of God allows only Heaven for thoſe who ſhall be made Veſſels of Mercy; and Hell for thoſe whoſe Sins have provoked him to caſt them down to thoſe diſmal Regions of Sorrow, and Eternal Woe: No Prayers after Death being available.

Deid. *Theſe Notions are as New as Strange to me. Have you any Authentick Proof for this?*

Gard. Yes; The revealed Word of God is a Sacred Proof beyond all Denyal: *The Rich Man in Hell lifted up his Eyes, being in Torment*, Luke 16. 23. *They ſhall ſit down with* Abraham, *and* Iſaac, *and* Jacob, *in the Kingdom of Heaven, but the other ſhall be caſt into utter Darkneſs, where ſhall be Weeping and Gnaſhing of Teeth* Matth. 28. 12. *He that Believeth ſhall be Saved, and he that Believeth not ſhall be Damned*, Mark 26. 16. Here is no ſuch thing as a *Purgatory* to be found; it is only the Blood of Chriſt that purgeth us from our Sins; and from all Uncleanneſs of Fleſh and Spirit, to preſent our Soûls Blameleſs and Unſpotted to his Father: By this I underſtand thoſe that Dye in the Lord need not our Prayers, and thoſe that Dye in their Sins no Prayers can avail them; for in the Grave there is no Repentance: *As the Tree falls, ſo it muſt lye, Whether it falls towards the North, or towards the South, where it falls there it muſt lie*. There is only two Extreams, *North*, and *South*; no Middle way, or *Purgatory* for it to fall in. And as Death leaves us, ſo Judgment will aſſuredly find us.

He would have Proceeded, but ſhe ſtopt him, ſaying, *Pray how long have you been of this Opinion?*

Gard. Ever ſince God was Pleaſed to Enlighten me with his Grace, to be attentive to his holy Word, and to be Guided by it.

Deid. *Was you ever then of the Church of Rome?*

Gard. In my younger Years I was; but through Mercy, being made Senſible by the Scriptures of the Corruptions and Errors of that Church, by the Aſſiſtance of a worthy Divine, I hope with St. *Paul*, Nothing ſhall be able to Separate me from the Love of God, which is in Chriſt Jeſus. I will not offend your *Ladyſhips* chaſte Ears with the Hiſtory of the Debaucheries and wicked Lives of divers *Popes*, and moſt of the *Clergy*; but will Pray Heaven to defend you from either their *Luſt* or *Revenge*. And ſince I have by a free Confeſſion put my Life into your Hands, I humbly Submit it to your Goodneſs, to ——

Here again ſhe interrupted him, and Demanded, *Why the Religion he Profeſſed was called the* Proteſtant Religion?

To which he Reply'd, As for being ſo called, it is to diſtinguiſh it from that of the *Romiſh*; it came from ſeveral Princes and Cities of *Germany*, who upon the Preachings of good Men, and their Exemplary Lives, *Proteſted* againſt the Uſurpations of the *Romiſh* Church and it's Errors. That it was no New *Doctrine*, but the Truth of *Primitive Chriſtianity*, Confeſſed, Aſſerted, and Purged from the Corruptions of *Popery*, taking the revealed Will of God for it's Guide.

At this *Deidamia* Pauſed a while; and then taking his *Bible* looked over the Sacred Proofs he had turned down in order; and her Colour went and came ſo, that he eaſily perceived her Mind was

labouring

labouring under ſome Difficulties, and ſo giving it him again, ſhe went away without ſpeaking a Word.

This ſomewhat perplex'd the Gardener, as fearing ſhe was Diſpleaſed with what he had ſaid; but her ſending for him privately to her Chamber the next Morning, under the Notion of bringing her ſome choice Flowers, baniſh'd all Fear in him; when they two being only left together, ſhe gently led him into her Cloſet, and ſhutting the Door to be more Private, *ſaid*, O *Bernard*, (fetching a deep Sigh) your Yeſterdays Diſcourſe has much broken my laſt Night's Reſt; I have been Meditating on it, and find abundance of Reaſon in what you ſay; you have (as St. *Paul* ſaid in another Caſe) *almoſt perſwaded me to be of your Perſwaſion*: I wiſh to God, moſt Vertuous Lady, *(Replyed he)* I might be an humble Inſtrument in Gods hand, to do any thing that may redound to his Glory and the Good and Welfare of your Pretious and Immortal Soul, without hazarding your Temporal Quiet and Peace, or expoſing you to any Danger; though, *for a Crown of Life and Immortality*, all Earthly things are to be Deſpiſed; and the holy Apoſtle accounts all this World's Good *but as Droſs and Dung, in compariſon of enjoying Chriſt Jeſus.* Well, *(ſaid ſhe)* this is my Aim, and if God enable me with his aſſiſting Grace, I hope, through his Mercy, to attain it. I have indeed, *(continued ſhe)* to my great Grief, obſerved the Looſe and Prophane manner of Living of thoſe that profeſs our Religion, alledging that a *Confeſſion*, with *Abſolution*, and ſome other Works, will Purge them from their Sins, and gain them that Bleſſedneſs in the End, which I could never Heartily believe they

would obtain by them: And ſince I have more ſeriouſly Conſidered God's Word, expreſly to the Contrary, I cannot believe that any thing but ſincere and unfeigned Repentance in the courſe of an uſpotted Life, can purchaſe (through the Merits of my Saviour) thoſe endleſs Glories and tranſcendant Bleſſings that God has promiſed to poor Mortals. ——— She would have Proceeded, but the falling Tears ſtopt her Utterance, and *Bernard* had an inward Rejoycing to ſee her brought to this Paſs; whereupon he Comforted her with good Advice, and the Cordials of God's Mercies and Promiſes. In brief he had made her ſencible of the Errors ſhe had been brought up in, and then opened (from Point to Point) the Cheat of pretended Miracles, and Relicks, the impoſing on People with Pardons and Indulgences to get Money; the Whoredoms, Murthers and Inceſts of many *Popes*, *Cardinals*, and *Prelates* of the *Romiſh* Church; their Unreaſonableneſs in prohibiting *Prieſts* Marriage, which is immediately appointed by God, and the allowing them by *Canons* and Decrees the Embraces of Concubines, or to commit adultery, expreſly contrary to the Command of the Almighty, for as much as he has expreſly ſaid, *Thoſe that do theſe things ſhall not inherit Eternal Life.* — He would have proceeded, but hearing the ſound of Feet coming up Stairs, ſhe haſtened him down a back way with ſo much Precipitation that he left his *Bible* behind him, which ſhe luckily ſeeing, Locked up in a *Scrutore*.

I have told you before, That Father *Antonio* the *Prieſt*, forgetting his Function, Duty and Diſtance, gave way to his unruly and and lawleſs Paſſion, and

and was then blundering up-Stairs to find her in Private, having almoſt fluſtered himſelf with Wine on Purpoſe either to be the more Confident in his wicked Deſign, to tell her the Story of his Nauſeous Love, or rather Luſt; or, that if being Reproved, he might have ſome ſlender Excuſe for his Impertinency, and lay (as too many do) the blame of their Folly on that which is rather an Aggra- of their Crime, *i. e.* their *Drunkenneſs*; and ſo Surpriſing however he came, that putting his Noſe over the upper ſtep juſt as the Gardener poſted out at the private Door, he had a Glimps of the back-parts of his Garments, as it afterward appeared; but at that time took no notice of any ſuch thing. *Deidamia* ſeeing *Antonio* coming towards her in a very Pleaſant Humour, Demanded, with a modeſt Decency, what Occaſion brought him thither to Diſturb her Retirement?

Ah (ſaid the impudent *Prieſt*, who could not long keep down his boiling Paſſion) *your two fair Eyes, ſweet Lady, like Load-ſtones, have drawn me to you; that beauteous tempting Face of yours has made me forget my ſelf, with my Duty to my Lord and the Truſt he repoſed in me.* Why certainly, ſaid *Deidamia*, (calling in her Patience to bridle her Paſſion) you are beſide your ſelf, *Antonio* —— What mean you by this kind of Diſcourſe? *If I am beſide my ſelf* (replyed he almoſt Crying) *your fair ſelf is the cauſe of it, whoſe Beauties, like Arrows, have Wounded my Heart and ſickned my Brain; I wiſh I had never ſeen ſuch Amiableneſs in Woman-kind; but ſince I have been ſo Unfortunate as to be your Fettered Captive, take ſome Compaſſion on me, and eaſe my Sufferings.* What Sufferings? Replyed *Deidamia*, Frowning? or, What

can

can be the Senſe of all this looſe ſtuff? *Why then* (Replyed he) *to be Serious, in plain Terms I Love you; and that ſo Paſſionately that unleſs you Condeſcend to make me ſuitable Returns, I ſhall have no Peace nor Quiet; but muſt be Miſerable and Wretched Eternally.* Then (ſaid ſhe) be you ſo: What have you ſeen of any Looſe Miſbecoming Behaviour in me, that you ſhould dare ſpeak thus to me? This, like a Thunder-bolt, ſtruck him Mute; when ſmoothing her Brows, and growing a little Calmer, ſhe ſaid, Come, come, *Arnoldo*, I took you for another Man; you profeſs Sanctity, and admoniſh others to lead a holy Life; is this Pretention then Real, or it is only Feigned, to try my Vertue? I *Proteſt*, ſaid he, lifting up both his Hands, *it is Real, and I cannot help it.* Why, ſaid ſhe, would you Commit ſo great a Wickedneſs if you might, and make your ſelf Guilty of a Crime ſo Henious? *Ah Lady*, replyed he, *if that be all, I can Abſolve you by the Power given me from the See of* Rome: *Conſent but to let me enjoy you, your Pennance ſhall be always eaſie; I'll get a Diſpenſation for your Marriage Vows from the Pope, with Pardons, Indulgences, or any thing, For Sins paſt, and thoſe that are to Come: Nay, I'll do any thing, ſo I do not fall under your Diſpleaſure; Let me alone for the Reſt, and* ———

This Inſolence ſo much Diſpleaſed the Vertuous Lady, that ſhe could hear no more, nor bear it any longer; but Commanded him out of her Preſence: Yet could not be rid of him, till ſhe Threatned to call up the reſt of her Servants. Whereupon he went Muttering away; and for two days after, as much as poſſible he could, he ſhunned coming into her Preſence; which much pleaſed her; for

ſhe

ſhe could not behold him but with Horror and Deteſtation.

This Attempt however, in one Senſe, (through the over-ruling *Providence* and *Goodneſs* of God, who is wonderful in Counſel, and excellent in Working, and can make the greateſt Wickedneſs of his Creatures, ſerve the Purpoſe of his own Glory) worked to her *Advantage*; for ſhe *Believed* now all *true* which the Gardener had told her, about the Wicked Debauched *Lives* of the *Romiſh Clergy*, ſince this Villanous *Prieſt* had not Scrupled to proffer the *Pop*'s Pardon for no leſs than *Adultery*, and that before it was Committed; by which means or Encoaragement, ſhe plainly ſaw it muſt Conſequently be that they frequently tempted eaſy and Ignorant People to the Commiſſion of many Sins: Therefore ſhe reſolved to leave theſe *blind Guides*, and take the *Word of God* for her *Leader* and *Inſtructor*; for fearing to come to *Confeſſion* or hear *Maſs*, ſometimes upon Pretence of Indiſpoſition, and at other times Purpoſely going Abroad, at the uſual times of either; and holding ſome other Conferences with the Gardener, which (as to Particulars) for Brevity's ſake I muſt of Neceſſity paſs over.

She found in her ſelf a ſtrong *Averſion* to the *Religion* ſhe had been brought up in; and having procured a *Bible* in the *French* Tongue, took ſuch Delight in Reading it, that whenever ſhe had time to Retire, it was not out of her Hand; yet ſhe kept this as Secret as poſſible, and not being ready at it her ſelf, got the Gardener to turn her down ſuch Proofs as were *the ſtrongeſt Arguments againſt the Errors of Popery, & where the Abominations of the Myſtical*

Myſtical Babylon was Pointed at. This he Joyfully did, and gave Praiſe to God, who had made him Inſtrumental in ſo good a Work; though he was not Ignorant his Life was liable to Pay for it, if it were Diſcovered: She likewiſe layed aſide her *Beads* and *Crucifix*, Converſed no more with *Roſaries* or the *Legends of Pretended Saints*; and though ſhe found ſome Temptations and Fears at the beginning, yet frequently Praying to God, ſhe over-came *Satan's Wiles*, and found abundance of Joy and Comfort enlightning her Soul, ſo that ſhe could not forbear breaking out into Raptures of Praiſes and Thankſgiving, for the wonderful Change (by ſo Strange and Unexpected a Means) wrought in her Soul.

Whilſt this Vertuous Lady and the Gardener held their private Correſpondence, in Diſcourſing of the things of God, and incouraging and Exhorting each other to Perſeverance and Stedfaſtneſs in Truth, *Antonio* and *Fronovius* equally burning with Luſtful deſires to enjoy the tender Beauties of the fair *Deidamia*, were Plotting and Contriving how their Lawleſs deſigns might beſt be brought about; though each Plotted by himſelf; (for as yet they were Ignorant of each other's Paſſion.) The Villanous *Prieſt* (as you have already heard) had been Repulſed with Indignation by the Chaſte Lady, which inwardly tormented him, and brought him almoſt to his Wits end; but the other (*Fronovius*) had made no tryal of her Virtues, and waited a favourable Opportunity to do it; and therefore he Thinks, Meditates, and caſts many things in his Mind, till at laſt (his Paſſion emboldning him) he reſolved to break the Ice with a Letter; and if ſhe took no Notice

of

of that, to Second it with his Perſonal Addreſs; but how he ſhould do this with Privacy and Safety, he was at a ſtand for a time; for he feared to truſt any Body to deliver it, leaſt his Criminal Love ſhould take Air; and to Deliver it himſelf would look too Daſtardly, as if he was not Capable, or at leaſt durſt not Speak for himſelf; however, in a little while he met with a fit Opportunity; for *Deidamia* accidentally droping her Handkerchief as ſhe paſſed through a large Gallery that led to her Apartment, he carefully took it up, and folding up his Letter in it (which he had ready Sealed by him) he gave it to her Gentlewoman to give it to her Lady, telling her he found it in the Long Gallery; the Gentlewoman knowing the Handkerchief to be her Ladies, immediately carried it to her; who received it from her without knowing any thing of a Letter being in it; and afterwards accidentally taking the Handkerchief out of her Pocket, the Letter dropt out upon the Ground, which ſhe taking up, and looking on the *Superſcription*, was extreamly ſurpriz'd to find it Directed to her Self; and haſtily opening it, was much more ſo, to find the *Contents* thereof to be as followeth:

PArdon me, moſt Lovely Deidamia, *if your Beauty makes me forget the Station I am in, and imboldens me to own a Paſſion I have Laboured in vain to hide; to be brief,* Dear Lady, *I am ſo Captivated by your Charms and ſingular Perfections, that I am conſtrained to ſay, I Love you infinitely above all Mortal Creatures; and ſince it appears to me Unreaſonable any one Man ſhould Monopolize ſo ineſtimable a Treaſure, give me leave to Hope; and don't ſuffer me to*

Languiſh

Languish and Dye, but render the Balm of your Kindness to Cure the Wounds which your bright Eyes have made in your otherways Wretched Servant,

Fronovius.

The Reading of this Letter fill'd her with Blushes, Anger and Amazement, at the unparallell'd Boldness and Villany of the Author of it, and at first was resolving to commit it to the Flames, or to Tear it in Pieces; but on second Thoughts, she laid it up in her Closet, where she Vexed and Fretted her self that she was thus left amongst such ungrateful Wretches, that dared so much to suspect her Vertues, and measure them by their own wicked and filthy Inclinations, as to Presume she would Defile her Marriage-Bed; being more Grieved for this Discovery than the former; for she knew the *Priest* had something of the *Libertine* in him, but this Man she had always held to be Honest and Vertuously, inclin'd till now; and to him she thought to have discovered *Antonio*'s Folly, if he persisted in it; that by Shame and Reproofs he might have Reclaimed him. But now she scarce knew who to trust; and could not therefore but Tremble at the Apprehensons of some Violence that might be offered her from those Lustful Miscreants, whose sight now very much displeased her. She thought once or twice of Displacing them; but found their Authority in the Family was so great, that in her Lord's Absence she could not do it: Whereupon she fell on her Knees to Implore God's Mercy and Protection, Commending her self wholly to his Care and Providence, and begging of Him to be her Guardian and Protector.

Though *Deidamia*'s Mind on these Surprizing Attempts

tempts on her Honour, was variously Toſſed, ſhe at laſt came to a ſettled Reſolution Prudently to Conceal what had paſſed, at leaſt till her Lord came Home, for fear of Scandal and Diſturbance: Yet *Fronovius* might well read in her Countenance wherever he came into her Preſence, that ſhe had read his Letter, and how ſhe reſented it; which made him ſtruggle to overcome his Paſſion, but in Vain; for like Oyle thrown on Fire, the Oppoſition his lewd Deſires met with, made them burn the fiercer; ſo that he reſolved to find an Opportunity to throw himſelf at her Feet, and diſcover his Paſſion to her by word of Mouth; and whilſt he waited for a convenient Time and Place to do it, he perceived the Gardener often to come in and go out very chearful, as highly Pleaſed and Contented; and that though he only carryed her *Fruits* and *Flowers*, yet his Frantick Paſſion and Jealouſie made him believe there was ſomething more in it. *Antonio* the *Prieſt* had alſo obſerved the like, and had much the ſame Sentiments, which emboldened them the more to Perſiſt in their wicked and unclean Deſires, and to continue to Perſecute the chaſte Lady with their deteſted Proffers of lawleſs Love; concluding, that if one of ſo low a Rank could be in Favour, they in time could not miſs of obtaining what they ſought; and ſo blinded with Paſſion, and purſuing what they aimed at (though, as has been ſaid, unknown to each other) they kept a watchful Eye upon the Actions of *Deidamia*, whoſe Mind was taken up in Contemplating the Divine Perfections of him who is Fairer than the Children of Men, being every day more confirmed in the Truth of her Religion, bleſſing

and praiſing God that by ſo wonderful and unexpected a means had brought her out of Darkneſs and Error into the marvellous Light of his Truth, and Engaged her Heart to Embrace and Entertain it above her chiefeſt Joy; partly looking on the Trouble ſhe had from *Antonio* and *Fronovius*, thoſe Brethren in Iniquity, as Temptations or Trials to Confirm her the more, by overcoming them, in the Doctrine ſhe had ſo lately Embraced; in which ſhe firmly reſolved to Perſevere againſt all Temptations whatever.

But whilſt theſe things paſſed, *Fronovius* had received no other anſwer to his Letter, but *Deidamia's* Angry and much changed Countenance towards him, which he would not take for an abſolute Repulſe, and therefore was reſolved to have her poſitive Anſwer: To obtain which, as *Deidamia* was one Morning leaning upon the Window in her Chamber, and looking into the Garden, he ſtole ſoftly up-Stairs, and was got into her Chamber juſt behind her, before ſhe heard him, when ſuddenly turning about and ſeeing him in a Dejected Poſture, ſhe was very much Surpriz'd and Trembled at the ſight; whilſt he by many Words endeavour'd to ſhew the Greatneſs of his Paſſion; but having ſomewhat recollected her Spirits, ſhe with an angry Countenance ſpake to him thus: *Why, how now,* Fronovius? *What Buſineſs have you here, thus to ſteal into my Chamber Unawares? This is ſuch an Effronted piece of Impudence and Rudeneſs as better becomes a Thief than the Steward of my Houſhold; and yet the filthy Errant that you come on, is far more Criminal than your coming: What have you ever ſeen of Lightneſs in my Carriage that ſhould make you*

thus

thus Audacious, or give you the leaſt Hope to ſucceed in your Unlawful and Wicked Deſires? I command you to be gone: and know that if you perſiſt in your Impudence and Folly, I will ſpeedily take thoſe Methods, that ſhall iſſue in your deſerved Shame and Confuſion.

He would have Replied, but ſhe forthwith went out of the Chamber, and would not ſtay to hear him.

This abſolute Denial and ſevere Reprimand, fill'd *Fronovius* full of Confuſion; and had almoſt made him hopeleſs; but after ſome Recollection, he ſtrongly Fancied, that the Oppoſition he met with, proceeded not from the Lady's Vertue, but from the greater Inclination ſhe had to ſome Rival, who enjoyed thoſe Favours which he had been purſuing; and he ſuppos'd the Gardener to be the Man, becauſe he had receiv'd ſome particular Marks of her Favour ſince the departure of the Count *Alanſon*. Being thus perſwaded, he was Reſolved (if it were poſſible) to make a plain Diſcovery; and to this end he Planted himſelf Privately one Evening near the Back-ſtairs that led out of the Garden into *Deidamia*'s Apartment (for that way he thought his ſuppoſed Rival muſt come.) And indeed he had not waited long, before a Perſon came by, and went up thoſe Stairs; whom he ſoftly followed to the Stair-foot; the Darkneſs of the Night hindered him from Diſcerning who the Perſon was that went by him, but he doubted not but it was the Gardener, and having liſtened at the bottom of the Stairs, hearing no Door open, nor no Key to turn, he imagined the Door was left open on purpoſe, and therefore reſolved to go up himſelf, and Surprize them in the very Act of their unlawful Love: He

had no ſooner reſolved this, but he hears ſome Body Coming ſoftly down Stairs; aſſoon as the Perſon came to the bottom of the Stairs, *Fronovius* boldly Siezes on him, and Demands what Buſineſs he had there at that late time of Night? But was extreamly Surpriz'd to meet with, inſtead of *Bernard* the Gardener, *Antonio* the *Prieſt*; whom then *Fronovius* thought had been with *Deidamia*. Upon which, ſpeaking big Words to *Antonio*, and threatning to kill him for the Diſhonour he had done his Lord, in Violating of his Bed: The Poor *Prieſt* (who was almoſt Dead with Fear, and extreamly Confounded at this Accident) tremblingly told *Fronovius*, That if he would ſave his Life, he would ingenuouſly tell him all he knew: Which *Fronovius* promiſing, *Antonio* told him the Story of his Love, Addreſſes, violent Paſſion, and the Repulſes he met with: That however being Jealous of the Gardener, and not finding him in his Lodging (for it ſeems *Deidamia* had newly appointed him another, unknown to *Antonio*) he ſuſpected he might be with his Lady; where Deſiring to Detect him, and bring him to Puniſhment, he had undertaken to come at this Unſeaſonable time; but the Doors being faſt Locked, and after a long Liſtening hearing no Stir nor Whiſpering, was returning back again to watch a more favourable Opportunity, that he might not on ſlight Grounds or Uncertainty, lay ſuch a thing to their Charge.

Fronovius finding the *Prieſt* had been Repulſed and Reproved as well as he, and that his Thoughts were the ſame with his as to the ſuſpected Rival, having huſhed his preſent Fears, and declared to him, though ſomewhat Darkly, his own Affections, *&c.*

&c. They went to *Antonio*'s Chamber, where they entered into a Combination ſo Helliſh and Malicious, that it brought many Woes and Miſeries, both to the Vertuous *Deidamia*, and the Gardener, till by the Mercy of God, to the Shame, and Confuſion of the Contrivers, they were turned to Bleſſings, to rejoyce the Injured, and clear their Innocence, after many inexpreſſible Sufferings.

Whilſt theſe wicked Men were thus Plotting to Revenge their Repulſes, *Deidamia* was thoughtful of her Safety: Sometimes ſhe Determined to Write to *Alanſon*, to remember his Promiſe and haſten his Return; but then ſhe Concluded that though his Preſence might reform theſe Diſorders, yet to deſert his Command upon any private Occaſion, would Derogate from his Honour; and then ſhe Conſidered, that ſhe could not hide from him the Religion ſhe had Embraced ſince his Departure, for ſhe could not Diſſemble if ſhe was taxed with it; and tho' his Company were dear to her, yet the Enjoyment of the other was more Pretious and Preferable; and that in Compariſon of the Love of Chriſt, all the Love in the World was but of little Value. At another time ſhe thought of Retiring to her Parents; but this ſhe fancied would be Diſpleaſing to her Lord, that in his Abſence ſhe ſhould leave the Government of his Family, which he had truſted to her Care at his Departure; theſe things ſeriouſly Weighed, ſhe reſolved to remain at home, thinking time would cure the wild Diſorders that were in the Minds of thoſe two wicked Servants.

After this laſt Reſolve, ſhe retired to her Cloſet, where ſhe had not been long e'er the Gardener came

came to preſent her with a Paper he had drawn up by her Order, of the Fundamental Points of the Proteſtant Religion, in oppoſition to Popery, one being compared with the other, and tryed by Scripture and the Fathers of the Primitive Times. She accepted this Paper very Kindly, promiſing to look it over at her Leiſure, as a Matter ſhe had much Deſired to be Informed in. Whereupon he Retired to his Labour in the Garden; whilſt a Bribed Spie their Enemies had ſet on the Watch, was run giving Information of the Gardener's being with his Lady; *Fronovius* was out of the Way, but *Antonio* haſted as faſt as he could, and ſoftly opening the Spring-Lock, Impudently enter'd the Chamber, drawing the Curtains of her Bed, in hopes of finding what he looked for there; but miſſing his Purpoſe, he ſtole to the ſide of her Cloſet, directed thither by her Voice; for the Pious Lady was fallen on her Knees, and fervently pouring out her Soul to God in theſe *Words*:

O Moſt bleſſed God, thou who art the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Conſolations, I bleſs and Praiſe thy holy Name, that thou haſt Enlightened the Eyes of my Underſtanding with the Knowledge of thy bleſſed Truth, and that thou haſt Delivered me from that Darkneſs and Ignorance, and thoſe Antichriſtian Errors wherein I have lived ſince my Child-hood, and haſt revealed the Saving Knowledge of thy Will unto me, as it is Contained in thy bleſſed Word the holy Scriptures: O ſtrengthen my Heart in the Profeſſion of thy Truth, and Grant that I may never return back again to Paiſh Idolatry and Superſtition, nor be under the Conduct of thoſe blind Guides any more, whatever Sufferings and Trials I may be liable to, or may undergo on that Account.

Theſe Pious Breathings of her Soul, *Antonio* to his great Amazement heard, and knew not what to Think, whether he ſhould Diſcover himſelf or Retire; but at laſt wickedly ſuppoſing the Fear ſhe would conceive, leaſt he ſhould Diſcover what ſhe had uttered againſt the *Romiſh* Religion; or that as he concluded ſhe was turned *Hugonot* (as they call *Proteſtants*) might induce her to Comply with his Luſt, he preſented himſelf before her, rudely opening her Cloſet-door e'er ſhe had time to riſe from her Knees. This continued Impudence of his, much troubled her Spirits; whereupon riſing haſtily ſhe forcibly pulled to the Door, after ſhe had given him a Thruſt back, and Locked herſelf in; however it unhappily fell out, that in this Diſorder not taking that Care as at another time ſhe would have done, that Paper which the Gardener had newly brought her, with her haſty ſhutting the Door, dropt out of her Coat, and unperceived by her, was ſhut out of the Cloſet, which *Antonio* took carefully up, and put in his Pocket, telling her (though the Door was ſhut againſt him) He had heard how ſhe Apoſtatized from her Religion, and how wickedly ſhe had ſpoken of the holy *Roman-Catholick* Church; and what Miſchiefs he could do her, if he ſhould Diſcover it; yet for the Love he bore her, if ſhe would yield to eaſe his Paſſion, it ſhould be Buried in Eternal Oblivion: But if ſhe refuſſed, he had now got an Opportunity to Ruin her.

The Pious Lady, (whoſe Fervent Devotions this Wretch had Interrupted) Bridled, as much as Humane Frailty could do, her Paſſion; Commanding him in mild Terms to be gone, and not Wound her

her chaſte Ears with his hated Diſcourſe: Againſt the Injury he Threatned her, ſhe truſted in God for Protection, who is a ſtrong Tower, for the Safety of all thoſe that Fly unto him; and ſhe doubted not when ſhe had an Opportunity to make her Lord Senſible of it, he would, through the Favour of Almighty God, concur with her in her Opinion.

Antonio finding himſelf diſappointed in his main Expectation, and throughly Nettled with this Anſwer, particularly the Concluſion of it, went away; Threatning and Muttering to himſelf: And in the Anti-chamber met *Fronovius*, who upon latter Notice was haſtening to him; to whom he had told all that he had ſeen and heard. This made them Conſult to take new Meaſures, and in Concluſion reſolved her Chaſtity, or Life ſhould be ſacrific'd to their Revenge. This was no ſooner Concluded on, but *Antonio* remembred the Paper he had taken up, and taking it out of his Pocket, knew it to be the Gardener's Hand, and at firſt ſuppoſing it to be a Love-Letter that might diſcover the Intreague between him and his Lady, was highly Pleaſed; but he had ſcarce read it half over, e'er he found ſuch weighty Arguments againſt the Church of *Rome*, Levelled ſo directly againſt her Tottering Foundation, as not only puzzled his Underſtanding, but made him Storm at a ſtrange rate: Whereupon *Fronovius* took it out of his Hand and read the reſt; and in the Cloſe theſe Words, Viz. *Vertuous Lady, theſe Arguments*, Pro et Contra, *I Submit to your great Wiſdom, being very Joyful in having under God, been a poor Inſtrument in Enlightening your Underſtanding to diſcern Truth from Falſhood.*

This left them no longer in Doubt who the Party

was

was that (as they termed it) had Traduc'd her to Apoſtatize and become a Heretick, and for this conſequently to enjoy Favours ſhe denyed to them; whereupon they Vowed a bloody Revenge; but fearing that the Love *Alanſon* bore her, would not be Effac'd by the change of her Religion, eſpecially when he ſhould come to underſtand their criminal Paſſion for her, and Practices againſt her, They reſolved to make her Parents bear the Blame of that Stupendious Wickedneſs which they themſelves deſign'd to be the Actors of: For they knew that her Parents were extraordinarily Bigotted to the *Romiſh* Church, and ſo were the likelieſt to deal with in this matter: Whereupon *Antonio* immediately poſted to them, and deſiring a private Conference with the Father and Mother; after many Hypocritial ſhews of Sorrow for the Diſgrace that would befall the Family, he declared how his Lady (ſince his Lord had been abſent) had been perverted from the *Catholick* Religion by a *Hugonot*, a Heretick Gardener, a Fugitive Wretch, that had been taken in ſome Years ago, upon Charity. He urged what diſhonour it would be to their Family, the Danger incurred by the King's Edicts; and laſtly the loſs of her Soul, if ſhe was not timely recovered and brought to the right Fold from whence ſhe had Perverſly Strayed. Then he began to Magnify the Pious Care and Pains he had taken to keep her in the right Way, and to prevent her falling into ſuch an Unpardonable Sin; but that the Devil had been too hard for his Induſtry and Labours, through God's high Sufferance, to bring ſome great Judgment on her for her Haughtineſs and Contempt, *&c.*

This

This being delivered in a Tone very moving and Paſſionate, ſeeming altogether in Pity to *Deidamia*; made the Father Sigh, and the Old Lady burſt out in Tears, wringing their Hands, and bewailing the Miſeries of their Aged Years, in this (as they then termed it) worſt of Misfortunes that could befall them; that the only Branch of their Family that ſhould Convey it to Poſterity, had made her ſelf a Caſt-a-way, for ſo in their Paſſionate Mood they expreſs'd her to be. *Antonio* was glad to ſee them thus Wrought; and the Storm of their firſt Grief ſpending it ſelf, and being allayed by falling Tears, they began to conſult more Maturely how this Misfortune might be Reverſed; and after many things were Debated, *Antonio*'s Device of Lodging her in a *Nunnery* (where ſhe might be Reſtrained from *Heretick* Books, as he ſaid, and the Company of any Seducers, and alſo be inſtructed by Vertuous *Nunns*, till her Lord came Home, and Determine what might further be done in it) was approved.

What was to be done with the Gardener was the next thing to be Conſulted, whether to make him away Secretly; or deliver him up to Juſtice; the Prieſt was for the former, but the Parents Conſciences was tender in that, and could not conſent to ſuch a Wickedneſs; but *Antonio* Alledged, that the whole Buſineſs would be made Publick if he were delivered up to Juſtice, and their Daughter would be brought in as Criminal, and Perhaps for her Obſtinacy her Lord might loſe his Honours, and Preferments at Court. This made them conſider further, and at laſt left it to the wicked Prieſt, or thoſe he ſhould appoint, to do, as he or they Pleaſed.

Pleaſed. They would have born him Company to *Alanſon*'s Houſe to ſee what their Perſwaſions might do, but he Urged it would only be a means to diſcover the Matter; and that it would be the beſt for them to come and Moderate things when the Count came Home, of which he would give them the firſt Notice, ſince at preſent what was to be done required Secrecy; that in the mean time ſhe ſhould be Provided for as became her Quality; and that ſuch a place as he mentioned, with Time and Company, was the beſt Cure to joſtle thoſe wild Notions out of her Head: Upon which they only ſent her a Letter, and reſolved not to go themſeves. So *Antonio* returned well Satisfied to his wicked Companion.

Deidamia (who was Ignorant of this) miſſing her Paper, and not doubting which way it went, taking more Care for *Bernard* the Gardener than her ſelf, thought by it he would be Diſcover'd; wherefore ſhe ſent for him, gave him a handful of Gold, and Commanded him to ſhift for himſelf; telling him what had paſſed, and the Danger he was in. This command he ſeemed exceeding loth to Obey, and with Tears in his Eyes, proteſted, That for the ſake of his Religion, and in her Defence againſt any Injury or Violence, he was willing to expoſe his Life: But ſhe urged ſo many things to haſten his Departure, that he Promiſed to do it; and ſo they (with ſheding many Tears) took a long Farewel of each other.

Bernard was prepared to Depart, as *Antonio* returned with his Orders; whereupon *Fronovius* clapped him up in the Dungeon, and that Night hired two Ruffians to carry him to the Sea-Clifts,

and

and throw him thence Head-long; and thither they carried him in a Sack on a Horſe, Gagged and Bound; but finding a Veſſel thruſt into a Creek very near the Clifts, one of them enquired and found it belonging to a *French* Plantation in the *Weſt-Indies*; whereupon they took the Method of *Joſeph*'s Brethren with the *Iſhmaelites*, to make the beſt Purchaſe of him, rather than Deſtroy him and loſe it; ſo he that came to Enquire, demanded of the Maſter *If he wanted a Luſty Servant?* He told him *Yes*; then he returned, and took the Gardener out of the Sack, Ungagged and Unbound him, and told him, That though he deſerved to Die for perverting his Lady to Hereſie; yet they had Compaſſion upon him, and would only ſend him to do Penance as a Slave in the *Weſt-Indies*, and bid him accept of it Thankfully and without Muttering; and thereupon they delivered him to the Maſter of the Veſſel, of whom they received 12 Crowns. After which they returned, and gave an Account they had thrown him with a great Stone about his Neck from a fifty Foot Cliff into the Sea, and for it received the Reward Promiſed them. Nor was *Bernard* unwilling to go with his unknown Maſter, finding Providence had changed the Death that was deſigned him, only into a Slavery, from whence he might Hope in time to be Releas'd. But his Care was greater for *Deidamia* than himſelf, for he had been uſed to Misfortunes, and innured to ſeveral Hardſhips. And her Grief was no leſs, that ſhe found her ſelf Conſtrained (as ſhe ſuppoſed for his Safety) ſo Abruptly to part with the Man that had been an Inſtrument in the filling her Heart ſo full of heavenly Conſolation; and had not laid her Commands

Commands on him to Write to her, or otherways give her ſecret Notice of his Abiding-place, (that ſhe might have had further Converſe with him, and been more Strengthened by him in the Profeſſion of that Truth he had inſtructed her in, and which ſhe was reſolved to abide by) till ſhe found means to reſtore him to his Place again.

Whilſt ſhe was Penſive on theſe Thoughts, *Antonio* having (as I before told you) gotten a Letter from her Parents to her, wherein they laid their Command on her till her Lord's return, *as ſhe tendered the Favour of Almighty God, their Bleſſing, and her own Honour and Safety, to be Ruled and Guided in all things by her Spiritual Paſtor.* (So, being ignorant of his Villany, they termed this wicked Prieſt.) *And whatever he perſwaded her to for the Good of her Soul, and Bodily Preſervation, readily to comply with it; to whoſe Care and Integrity, next to the Heavenly Protection, they heartily Recommended her till her Lord and Husband came Home:* This was Signed by both of them. And *Antonio* having conſulted *Fronovius* about it, they both came boldly to her Apartment, when they knew ſhe was in Private, and preſented it to her, *Charging her to Obey it as ſhe tendered her Safety*: She no ſooner looked on it, but ſhe asked them ſo many Queſtions, that by *Antonio*'s Replies, ſhe was not inſenſible they had traduced her to her Parents; and after ſome juſt Reproaches told them, *It ſhould not be long before ſhe would go and Plead her own Cauſe, and doubted not ſo to juſtify her Proceedings to her Parents, that the black Villany of her baſe and treacherous Accuſers ſhould be unable to ſully the brightneſs of her Innocence.* This at firſt ſtartled them; but being reſolved to proceed in

their wicked Deſigns, they plainly told her, *She was at their Diſpoſal, and that they had Orders to carry her to a Nunnery, where ſhe ſhould be Honourably Uſed, but debarred from the Deſtructive Principles ſhe had lately Imbibed, till her, and their Lord, returned, to take the matter into his own Hands, and determined how he Pleaſed to Diſpoſe of her.*

This inſufferable Impudence of theſe Luſtful Wretches, ſtirred up her Zeal to ſo much holy Anger and Deteſtation of what they Propoſed, that ſhe in a great Paſſion proteſted to *Dye a thouſand Deaths, if it were Poſſible, and by the moſt exquiſite Torments their Helliſh Malice could invent, rather than to be incloſed within the Walls of a* Nunnery, *which ſhe was Satisfied was no other than a Sink of Sin, and plauſible Colour for Lewdneſs and Debauchery.* But they without Replying, offering to force her from the Cloſet, ſhe oppoſed her Strength againſt their Rudeneſs, crying out for help to the reſt of her Servants; but *Fronovius* who was the *Steward* and *Governour* of the Family, had ſo ordered the matter, that thoſe that immediately Waited upon her, were then out of Hearing: So that whithout any other Interruption than what her Contending gave them, they Hurryed her into a cloſe Chamber in the remoteſt part of the Houſe, where they Locked her in, and went to conſult further how they ſhould ſecretly convey her thence; whilſt ſhe (who expected after ſuch Treatment, nothing but a Violation of her Chaſtity, and would much rather have embraced Death, and counted it a Favour) was pouring out of her Soul to God, and imploring his Help in that needful time of her Trouble, and begging of him to Strengthen her Faith, till on a ſudden,

ſudden, to allay the Troubles and Afflictions of her Mind, ſuch beams of Joy and Comfort were darted into her Soul, that ſhe aſſured her ſelf, *That that merciful God, whoſe gracious Protection ſhe had been ſeeking, would work out Deliverance for her in due Time.*

The Conſpirators by this time had come to a Reſult to rid themſelves (as they thought) for ever from the Fear they were in of their Villanous Practices being Diſcovered; which was this.

Fronovius, *Counterfeited a Letter in* Alanſon's *Hand ſo very Exactly, that if himſelf had ſeen it, he might have been puzzled to diſtinguiſh it from his Own; and having got two Ruffains ready, one Dreſſed in the Habit of an Officer, and the other like a Servant attending him;* Antonio *and his Companion in Wickedneſs went to her with it, and falling on their Knees, with ſome forced Tears, humbly implored her Pardon for the Indignities they had offered to her, beſeeching her to be their good Lady, notwithſtanding their Follies; and they would never in the like Nature Offend, nor do any thing to Diſoblige her; with many other Proteſtations and much feigned Sorrow for their Rudeneſs and deſigns upon her Chaſtity, imploring her not to Diſcover it to her Lord.*

Whilſt *Deidamia* was wondering what that ſudden Alteration in thoſe who had lately ſo Rudely treated her, might mean, *Fronovius* delivered her the Letter, in which ſhe read theſe Words;

My Dear DEIDAMIA.

THo I know that the News wich theſe Lines will acquaint you with, cannot be Acceptable to you, yet I Conjure you by our Mutual Affections, that you

ſuffer not your ſelf to be Diſturbed, but bear what I ſhall tell you with that Patience and Serenity of Mind which becomes you, as knowing it is our Duty in all things that happen to us to ſubmit to the Divine Will. Know then, my Lovely Deidamia, *that in a late Encounter with a Party of the Enemies, I happened to be Wounded by a Chance-ſhot, which my Chirurgeons tell me is Mortal; and fearing that it may be ſo, and Deſiring above all things here below, to have a ſight of your Dear Self before I depart out of the World, I have ſent the Bearer,* Monſ. Durell, *one of my Captains, to Conduct you to me forthwith: Who is a Perſon of that Worth and Honour, that you may truſt your ſelf with him without the Trouble of any Attendants but what he brings with him, becauſe I would have you come as ſpeedily as may be: Which is at Preſent all from him who is both in Life and Death,*

Your ever Faithful Husband

Charleroy,
July 12th. 1693. *D'ALANSON.*

At the Reading this ſhe Trembled, looked Pale, and ſhed abundance of Tears, being in the greateſt Diſorder and Confuſion imaginable, intreating inſtantly to ſee the Party that brought it, promiſing (on the renewing their entreaties) not to Diſcover their Wickedneſs, if by their Future Demeanour they made an Attonement for what had paſſed; and they thereupon ſolemnly promiſing it, led her down into the Hall, where the pretended Captain and his Servant Bowed very low to her; and being before hand Inſtructed, anſwered all her Queſtions ſo cunningly, that ſhe verily believed

lieved the Letter to come from her Lord, and that all he ſaid was true, deſiring them to refreſh themſelves whilſt ſhe fitted herſelf with other Apparel, and took ſome Jewels, Gold, *&c.* along with her; which done, and being about four in the Evening, the Innocent Dove committed herſelf into the Tallons of theſe bloody Vultures, mounting behind the ſuppoſed Captain, who had his Inſtructions not to let her ſee the next Morning Dawn. *Antonio* and *Fronovius* pretended much Sorrow at her Departure, but inwardly Rejoyced, that by this Stratagem they ſhould get her eaſily into the Trap without Noiſe or Diſturbance; which had they gone about to do by Force, her Crys might have brought Reſcue, and prevented their Villanous Purpoſe: The curſed *Prieſt* indeed would have firſt had her Raviſhed by himſelf and his Companion, and then Murthered at Home, but the other conſidering that it would be Difficult to Diſpoſe of the Dead Body, contrived this way. But I muſt leave them for ſome time, hugging themſelves in their Security, and follow the Deceived Innocent.

The bloody Cut-throats, having got the Prize by her too much Credulity, into their Poſſeſſion, took all the by-Wayes they could, croſſing the Countrey and holding her in Diſcourſe with many things relating to the War; and ſo ſpun out the time till the Sun was near ſetting, when coming into a Valley between two vaſt Woods, in a place much Unfrequented, they Rode into one of them at a turning of a narrow Way, where the ſuppoſed Captain ſtopped, and the Ruffain that Rode ſingle alighted, and ſurprizingly pulled *Dridamia* from

behind him, who at ſo unexpected a Rudeneſs Trembled, and began to ſuſpect the Treachery; nor was the other ſlow in Diſmounting, when both together they carried her into the Wood; upon this with piteous Shrieks and Cries, ſhe Demanded *the Cauſe of ſuch Violence*; but without Replying, the Villain who had carried her, drawing his Sword, Directed it for the fatal Thruſt, deſigning inſtantly to pierce her Heart; whilſt on her *Knees ſhe was imploring their Pity and Compaſſion, and intreating to know in what ſhe had Offended, to make them ſo void of Humanity towards a diſtreſſed Lady, whom they had betrayed into that Solitary Place; being Convinced that her Lord had given no ſuch Commands*: No, (replyed they) *that's true, nor do we know him; but* Antonio *and* Fronovius *have, and we muſt Obey them; beſides, you are an* Heretick, *and ought not to Live.*

Deidamia now finding ſhe was betrayed by her wicked Servants into the Hands of theſe mercileſs Villains; and ſeeing nothing but preſent Death before her Eyes, ſhe poured out her Soul to God in Vehement Petitions for Favour from his Hands, and that if he ſaw fit ſhe ſhould Live no longer here, that he would receive her into Life Eternal, and that rather (if it were required) ſhe might Seal her Profeſſion of the Reformed Religion, in which ſhe had found ſo much heavenly Conſolation, with her deareſt Blood, than be prevail'd with to Recant it. *But thou, O Lord,* (ſaid ſhe) *who Deliver'dſt* Daniel *from the Fury of the Lyons, and the Three Children from devouring Flames, canſt, if thou wilt, in this great Extremity, deliver me from theſe Blood-thirſty Men, whom I have in no manner Injured:*

red: But be it as thou pleaſeſt, ſo that my departing Soul, when it leaves this Mortal Body, may find Shelter in the Arms of thy Mercy. The Villains, who all this while had eyed her, and ſaw her Lovely in her Tears, Troubled themſelves not about her Religion, for their buſineſs was to Murther her; and therefore the pretended Captain ſaid, *Lady! our time is ſhort, this inſtant you muſt Die, therefore ſettle your Mind for the fatal Stroke*: To this ſhe made no Reply, but continuing on her Knees, with Eyes up-lifted to Heaven, Sighs and Tears being the Language of her Soul, his impious Hand was about to give the fatal Thruſt; but the other, catched hold of his Arm, and ſtopt his Sword; and after that, they Whiſpered; but ſhe knew not what they ſaid, till their Further Attempts revealed it.

They had no ſooner done conferring Notes, but they Violently forced her on her Back, and prepared to Raviſh her firſt, and then put her to Death; her Cries upon this were redoubled, and ſhe begged Death rather than the loſs of her Chaſtity, opening her Boſom, and tempting their Swords to Pierce it. But her Beauty in this ſorrowful Condition, was ſo Charming in their Luſtful Eyes, that they were inexorable to her Crys, and Prayers. O had *Alanſon* been but there, with what Vengeance at this piteous Sight would his Sword have been drawn to their Deſtruction and her Reſcue! But he being Ignorant of the Wounds his dear Lady was about to receive, Heaven interpoſed, for her Reſcue: For the Villains fell at Diſcord who ſhould firſt enjoy her; and the Conteſt grew ſo hot, that they diſputed it with their Swords, and in the Duel the pretended Captain (moſt forward in the Miſchief)

chief)was ran through the Body,and with a ghaſtly Groan yielded up his wicked Soul into the hands of Death. The other being ſorely Wounded, and Fainting through loſs of Blood, gave *Deidamia* time to fly further into the Woods, wandering ſo far,that Night covering every thing with Darkneſs, ſhe thought ſhe might now reſt a little to recover Breath; and ſo ſate down upon the Ground: Tho' the Danger: ſhe had ſo lately eſcaped from wicked Men, and thoſe that ſhe now feared from wild Beaſts, would not a long time ſuffer her to cloſe her Eyes; however ſhe ceaſed not with earneſt Prayer and Supplication to recommend herſelf to God, and implore his Aid and Protection; who by the late wonderful Deliverance he had given her, had ſufficiently ſhown her how able he is to ſave to the uttermoſt, even in the midſt of the greateſt Dangers. The conſideration whereof, was a mighty Allay to her preſent Sorrows in the midſt of that Forlorn Condition to which ſhe was reduced; ſo that a little Supported thereby, ſhe fell, at laſt, into a ſound Sleep,having no other Pillow but a Turff of Graſs,nor Covering than the Canopy of Heaven. The Morning being come, *Deidamia* again retur'd Thanks to God, both for her late Deliverance, and her laſt Nights Preſervation; earneſtly begging of him, That as he had Graciouſly begun to Deliver her, ſo that he would in his own Good time compleat it, to his own Glory and her Good; and, that tho' at preſent her Afflictions were not Joyous but Grievous, yet, that through God's over-Ruling Providence,they might afterwards bring forth for her the peaceable Fruits of Righteouſneſs; Humbly deſiring ſhe might be

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kept from entertaining hard Thoughts of God, or of his Truth and Wayes which ſhe had ſo lately Embraced, notwithſtanding any Sufferings ſhe had or might meet withall upon that Account. And having thus Recommended herſelf to God, ſhe Reſolved, if it were poſſible, to get out of that Deſolate, Pathleſs, and Solitary Place: But the more ſhe thought to Extricate herſelf, the more ſhe found herſelf Entangled; and without hopes of getting out. The Fruits that at that time of the Year grew upon the Trees, ſupply'd her with Food; and the little purling Streams that iſſued from ſome Springs in the Wood, ſupply'd her with Drink: So that finding it impoſſible to get away, ſhe was Content to tarry there till the Providence of God ſhould find out ſome way of Deliverance for her; being Satisfied in this, That the Comforts of Converſation, and other Conveniences that ſhe us'd to have, were abundantly made up in the Communion ſhe enjoy'd with God, whoſe bleſſed Preſence (as ſhe has ſince Confeſs'd) did more than Recompence for all her outward Wants.— In the Poſſeſſion of which Happineſs we will leave her for a time, and look back to ſee what became of the Surviving Ruffian.

His Companion (as we have already heard) was kill'd in their Conteſt about which ſhould Enjoy (or rather Raviſh) *Deidamia* firſt; and he that Surviv'd, Fainted away through loſs of Blood, which (as we have already Related) made way for *Deidamia*'s Eſcape: But he recovering in ſome little time, found means to ſtop it's Effuſion; and then miſſing of *Deidamia*, he made what Search he could for her, not ſo much to ſatisfy his Luſt,

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(which his loſs of Blood had pretty much allay'd) as to take away her Life, that in time to come ſhe might not be an Evidence of his Wickedneſs; but not finding her after all his Search, he Buried his Companion, and returned to thoſe that had ſet him to Work; telling them, *That* Deidamia, *when ſhe found ſhe muſt Die, by a Surprize had ſnatch'd away his Companion's Sword, and Slain him with it by an unlook'd-for Thruſt: But that himſelf had quickly Reveng'd it by her own Death, and had buried them both in a deep Pit to avoid Diſcovery.* This they believed, and gave him what they had Promiſed; being mightily Pleaſed that now they were (as they thought at leaſt) out of all Danger.

Whilſt theſe Things were thus Acted, *Deidamia*'s Parents became exceedingly Troubled, even to that Degree, that their Sleep departed from them; and thoſe little Slumbers that they ſometimes got, were interrupted with ſtrange and unaccountable Dreams; which was alſo attended with an unuſual Melancholly, of which they could give no Account. This made 'em reſolve to enquire after *Deidamia*, of whom they heard nothing, ſince the Permiſſion they gave to *Antonio* to carry her to a *Nunnery*.

But *Fronovius* and *Antonio* had been ſo Cunning to prevent their Diſcovery of the Villainy, that for a Sum of Money they engaged a certain Abbeſs of *Antonio*'s Acquaintance, to acknowledge (when there ſhould be Occaſion) that *Deidamia* had been brought thither, but that ſhe had made her Eſcape from thence, ſo that ſhe knew not what was become of her, nor could give any Account of the Reaſon of it, but only by a Note that ſhe had left behind her in her Chamber; which Note *Fronovius* (who as

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we have already ſaid, had a Notable Faculty at Counterfeiting of Hands) had Writ in a Hand ſo like *Deidamia*'s, that it could not be diſtinguiſhed. They had alſo given the Abbeſs a Ladder of Ropes, by which it was pretended ſhe had made her Eſcape. *Fronovius* and *Antonio* having ſo well laid their Deſign with the Abbeſs, kept poſſeſſion of *Alanſon*'s Houſe without Fear or Controul. And therefore when *Deidamia*'s Parents came thither to enquire after their Daughter, they receiv'd them with much ſeeming Courteſie and Kindneſs; and *Fronovius* told them, *That tho' it had Unhappily fallen out that their Lady had been Perverted to Hereſie ſince the Departure of the* Count *her Husband, yet he had taken that Care of the Family in his Lord's abſence which was conſiſtent with his Duty; and that as to his Lady, the Orders they had been pleas'd to give to* Antonio *to ſend her to a* Nunnery *had been punctually Obſerv'd; and he hop'd by that means, againſt the coming Home of their Lord, ſhe might be again reconciled unto the Mother-Church, out of which there is no Salvation.* Tho' this Diſcourſe of *Fronovius* was very Plauſible, yet the Parents of *Deidamia* were not at all Satisfied with it, but deſired to ſee and Diſcourſe with her in the *Nunnery* where ſhe was, which *Fronovius* ſeemed ready to aſſent to, and with *Antonio* offered their Service to accompany them thither, telling them they had given ſo ſtrict a Charge to the Abbeſs to prevent any *Hereticks* from coming to her, that none might be admitted to ſpeak with her, but themſelves, or by their immediate Order.

The Parents being for the preſent Satisfied with this Anſwer, lay there that Night, big with the Hopes

Hopes they had of ſeeing their Daughter the next Day: Which being come, they went with *Antonio* and *Fronovius* to the *Nunnery*; but were extreamly Surprized when they came thither, to hear the Abbeſs ſay, That the young Lady had been too hard for her; and notwithſtanding all her Care and Diligence, had found a way to make her Eſcape but the Day before; and then led them into the Garden, ſhewing them the Ladder of Ropes by which ſhe got over the Wall; and then having them into a Room which ſhe called her Chamber, gave them the Note which *Fronovius* left with her, asking her Parents if they knew that Hand; they haſtily Opened it, and thought verily it had been of *Deidamia*'s Writing: And then Reading it, found it to Contain theſe Words:

HAving been forced to this Place againſt my Mind and Conſcience, let none be troubled that I have found a Means to ſet my ſelf at Liberty: And am gone to Him who no doubt will Right me of the Injury done me by my Treacherous Servants.

Deidamia.

Her Parents upon reading this Letter, and believing it to be True, burſt forth into Tears for the Loſs of their Daughter; not knowing now in what part of the Country to ſeek for her: The only Hopes they had was, that ſhe was gone into *Flanders* to her Husband, to which Opinion *Fronovius* and *Antonio* both perſwaded them, from that Expreſſion in the Note, [*I am gone to him that will Right my Injuries.*] Upon which, giving *Fronovius* a Charge to be a Faithful Steward in his Lord's Abſence, they returned to their own Houſe, where

where they Writ the following Letter to the *Count* and ſent it by an Expreſs to *Flanders*.

To the Count *D' Alanſon*, Coll. of the Regiment of *Picardy*.

Deareſt SON,

IT is not without Unexpreſſible Grief that we Write theſe Lines, which brings you the ſad Tidings of the greateſt Affliction that ever befell you; and which, without the Divine Aid, you will find it very hard to bear; but I hope Heaven will Support you under it; it is in Brief, the Loſs of Deidamia; *I do not mean by Death, for had Heaven Ordain'd it ſo, that would have been far more Eligible: But, alas! She is Loſt both to herſelf and all of us; She is (ſince your Departure) Perverted to* Hereſie, *and turned an obſtinate* Hugonot; *which whilſt we endeavoured to Reclaim her from, by Conſenting (upon the Advice of your* Chaplain, *Father* Antonio) *that ſhe ſhould be put into a* Nunnery, *ſhe is eſcaped from thence no one knows whither; the Thoughts whereof has filled the Hearts of my ſelf and Wife with ſuch Unexpreſſible Grief and Sorrow as has rendered us altogether Unconſolable. Our only remaining Hope is, that ſhe may be gone to you; and that if you have not already, you may yet Hear of her in a few Days; for ſhe left behind her in her Chamber, at the* Nunnery *of St.* Bridget's *(whither* Fronovius *and* Antonio *conducted her) the following Note.*

HAving been forced to this Place againſt my Mind and Conſcience, let none be troubled that I have found a means to ſet my ſelf at Liberty: And am gone to him who no doubt will Right me of the Injury done me by my Treacherous Servants. *Deidamia.*

It is this Note alone that gives us ground to Hope that you may ſee her again; and I Pray God it may fall out accordingly. And whenever this loſt Sheep ſhall be found again, I doubt not but you will lay her in your Boſom, according to the Example of our great Shepherd; and by your wonted Love and Tenderneſs towards her, endeavour to reſtore her again to the true Fold and Church of Chriſt; to whoſe holy Protection I commit you, and ſo Farewel.

J. MONTAIGN.

The Count *Alanſon* was ſo tranſported with Grief at the reading of this Letter, that for ſome time he remained Speechleſs: His trouble was too great to Vent it ſelf in Words; ſtill Waters being always the Deepeſt: But ſoon after his Sorrow gave it ſelf Vent in the moſt paſſionate and feeling Complaints: And then calling for a *Pen* and *Ink*, he Writ the following Letter to his Father.

Alanſon to the Sieur *Montaign*.

SIR,

I Received your Letter, the contents whereof has brought that Grief and Sorrow to my Heart, that will continue there for ever, unleſs the Sight of my Deareſt Deidamia *removes it: Her being turn'd* Hugonot *is not that which gives me much Trouble, it rather makes me think there is ſomething of Good in thoſe Opinions, or elſe ſo much Goodneſs and Vertue as that of* Deidamia's, *could never have embrac'd 'em. Had you but let her alone in my Houſe I had been Happy ſtill; but your endeavouring to reclaim her, has been the Ruine of us both: I am ſo Tranſported with Grief and Anger, that I know not what to Write, nor would I Write at all, but come away immediately, were it not for the Hopes you*

you give me from the Note found in the Chamber of my Deareſt Deidamia, *that ſhe was gone to Him that would ſoon* Right her Injuries, *and that can be none but my Self: And might I but Recover her again, ſhe ſhould not be miſtaken in her Thoughts. 'Tis in Hopes of her Coming that I am Content to ſtay here a little longer: For 'tis* Deidamia *alone can make me Happy. Farewell.*

ALANSON.

The Meſſenger being return'd with *Alanſon*'s Letter, it adminiſtred freſh Grief to *Deidamia*'s Parents. For they thereby found that by their too eaſily yielding to *Antonio*'s Deſigns, they had not only loſt their Daughter, but the Affections of their Son in-Law. In this ſad State we will now leave them, and make *Deidamia* a Viſit in her ſorrowful Solitude.

Deidamia being in that lonely Place, each Day removed her Habitation, until at laſt ſhe found a Cave, which covered her from the Injuries of the Weather, and was a quiet Reſting place to her in the Night-ſeaſon, for by ſhutting up the Mouth of the Cave ſhe ſecur'd herſelf from all Danger; which ſhe look'd upon, and thank'd God for, as a great Mercy: And Living upon the Fruits that grew in the Wood, (as I ſaid before) ſhe ſpent her time wholly in Prayer and Meditation; and tho' her Diet and Lodging was extreamly changed, yet her Health was both continued and encreaſed, and ſhe found that Promiſe made good to her; *As thy Day is, ſo ſhall thy Strength be.*

She had now Lived almoſt four Months in this Solitude, and the Winter approaching, began to

make the Woods uncomfortable; and the Cold extreamly nipping: So that *Deidamia* was forced often to walk apace to get her a-heat. One day as ſhe had walked farther than Ordinary, ſhe diſcovered ſome kind of an Obſcure Path ſhe had not ſeen before, and tho' ſhe knew not whither it would lead her, ſhe was reſolved to follow the Track: She travelled ſo far that Day, that it was in Vain for her to think of retreating to her beloved Cave, where ſhe had lain ſo many Nights; and therefore making the beſt Shift that ſhe could, ſhe ſat down upon the Ground, and Recommending herſelf to the Almighty's Protection, compos'd herſelf to Reſt; the next Morning ſhe aroſe as ſoon as it was Light, and travelling forward, perceived her Path to be like that of the *Juſt*, which the Wiſe man tells us, *Shines more and more unto the perfect Day*: And ſhe was encouraged to go on, becauſe ſhe Fancied ſhe heard the Barking of *Dogs*; and after travelling a little further, ſhe was well aſſured it was a real Thing, and not a Fancy only; and therefore ſhe purſu'd her Journey the more eagerly. The Sun had not come to it's Meridian, when ſhe heard an unuſual Ruſhing amongſt the Buſhes, and ſtanding ſtill to know what it might mean, ſhe perceived a Grave Old Man with two *Dogs* following him, come from among the Trees. They were both alike Surpriz'd at the Enterview; for the Old Man having never ſeen any Humane Creature in that Place before, could not but be amaz'd to ſee a Woman coming from the midſt of the Wood; and therefore addreſſing himſelf to her, he enquired by what Misfortune ſhe came thither? Intreating her not to be Afraid, for ſhe ſhould receive

ceive no Harm from him: *Deidamia* upon this looking Earneſtly upon him, and perceiving his Carriage and Demeanour to be what became the Gravity of his Years, ſhe told him, *She was indeed in a wild Place, and knew not the Way out again.* To this the Old Man Replyed, *If ſhe would go with him to his homely Cottage, his Wife would Conduct her out of the Wood.* *Deidamia* preſently accepted of his Kindneſs and went with him. And after they had gone about the ſpace of a Mile, they came to his Houſe; where the good Old Woman (who was ſomewhat Surprized to ſee her Husband bring a Stranger along with him) roſe up and received her very Courteouſly, deſiring her to ſit down, and refreſh herſelf with ſuch homely Fare as their Cottage afforded: Which ſhe did; and then asking her farther how ſhe came into that Place, *Deidamia* deſired *they would ask her no Queſtions, for the repetition of her Sorrows would but renew her Grief; only thus much ſhe would let 'em know, that her being there Alive was the Effect of God's Providence in delivering her from Wicked and Blood-thirſty men that ſought to take away her Life.* Upon which, perceiving her full of Grief, they ask'd her no more Queſtions, but finding her very Weary, they led her into a homely but clean Apartment, to repoſe herſelf upon the Bed: *Deidamia* was mighty thoughtful what this Aged Couple might be; and whether or no, for her Apparels ſake, and that Gold and thoſe Jewels ſhe had about her, ſhe might not fall into as great a Danger as that ſhe had formerly eſcap'd, and tho' ſhe was at firſt glad of their Company, ſhe could almoſt have wiſhed herſelf in her Beloved Cave again. But her Fears

were quickly over, when by a *French* Bible and other good Books, ſhe found in her Room, and by the hearty Prayers of the good Old Man at Night, ſhe perceiv'd they were *Hugonots*, who had fled into that ſolitary Retirement for the ſake of their Religion: This made her be much more free with them, bleſſing God for his Providence in bringing her thither, and reſolving to continue there, till ſhe could meet with an Opportunity to return home into the Arms of her Deareſt *Alanſon*: And the Old Couple having underſtood her Hiſtory more fully, by their Pity and Commiſeration made her Abode with them more eaſie: And the Communion ſhe had with them in the things of another World, weaned her from this in a great Meaſure. So that here ſhe took up her Abode, and continued with them not only that Winter, but the Year following, until ſhe was found out by her Beloved *Alanſon*, to whom it is time that we now Return.

The Count *Alanſon* having tarried at the Camp a whole Month after the receiving of his Father-in-Law's Letter, in expectation of ſeeing his deareſt *Deidamia*; began now to be impatient of tarrying any longer; and indeed, during all that time, he was ſo much chang'd in his Carriage, Humours, and Converſation, that all thoſe with whom he us'd to Converſe in the Camp, took Notice of it, he having abandon'd himſelf to an extream Melancholly; and therefore deſiring of the King to go Home, both for the Recovery of his Health, and for the ſettling ſome Affairs in his Family, he ſoon obtain'd it, and ſoon after (tho' with a heavy Heart) arriv'd there: Where his firſt Buſineſs was

to

to enquire after *Deidamia*, but none of the Servants could give any Account of her but *Fronovius* and *Antonio*, who gave him the ſame Account that had been ſent him by his Father-in-Law. To which he Sternly asked them, *How they durſt diſpoſe of their Lady and Miſtreſs, contrary to her Will, without his Conſent or Knowledge?* Telling them, *He feared by the Note ſhe had Written, it was their Treachery that was the occaſion of her Loſs; which if he could but be Confirmed in, he would take Care they ſhould receive a Puniſhment ſuitable to the greatneſs of their Crimes.* At which *Fronovius* and *Antonio* began to Tremble, and make the beſt excuſes for themſelves they could; Alledging the Conſent of her Parents for what they did. But that did not at all Satisfie *Alanſon*, who ſoon diſcharg'd them from his Service, and reſolv'd to Travel in Search of *Deidamia*, tho' he knew not which way to bend his Courſe. But after many a tedious Journey, enquiring amongſt thoſe who were Favourers of the *Hugonots*, he yet could hear no Tidings of her. So that full of Grief and Sorrow, he led a retir'd and Melancholly Life in his own Houſe, abſenting himſelf from all Company, and Mourning like a *Turtle* that had loſt his Mate, tho' his Friends by all means poſſible endeavoured to Comfort him; perſwading him to ſurceaſe his Grief; for that it was Probable *Deidamia* by ſome Misfortune or other was Dead; and therefore they advis'd him to think of a ſecond *Marriage*, as that which would reſtore his former Gayety, and make him forget *Deidamia*. But the more they endeavour'd to perſwade him, the more he was reſolved to the Contrary; and therefore to avoid their continued Importunities,

nities, he fixt his Reſolution once more to Travel in Queſt of her; which accordingly he did, but without Succeſs. And therefore he reſolved to return again to his own Houſe, and there ſpend the remainder of his Dayes in Solitude.

But as he was returning Home, in his way he met with a Vaſt Concourſe of People, and Demanding the Occaſion of it, he was told a Criminal was a going to be broken on the Wheel, for a Murther he had Committed; upon which Curioſity led him to ſee the Execution. And getting pretty near, the Malefactor caſt his Eyes upon him, and ſtraight knew him to be *Alanſon* the Husband of *Deidamia*; and being ſmitten with Remorſe of Conſcience, he beckoned *Alanſon* to come near, and humbly begged his Pardon for the Wrong he had done him. At this *Alanſon* both Started and fell a Tembling, fearing it was for her Murder the Criminal was to Die: But coming nearer, the Malefactor asked him, *If he had heard any News of his Lady?* And then with Tears Confeſſed *That himſelf and another had been Hired to Murther her, to which end they carried her into a Wood,* (which he named to him) *but by a miraculous Providence ſhe eſcaped out of their Hands; That afterwards he had reported to thoſe that ſet him to Work, that he had actually Murthered her; For which he received the Reward; but which way ſhe Eſcaped, he knew not; And that this was about two Years ſince.* The *Count* urged him to tell the Names of thoſe that had ſo Hired him; but he ſaid, *He had Sworn upon the holy Sacrament of the Altar never to Diſcloſe 'em; and that he feared Damnation if he ſhould: Only,* (ſaid he) *this I may ſay without breaking my Oath, They were two Perſons in*

whom

whom you have put a great deal of Confidence. And then ſolemnly Atteſted, *That what he had ſaid was the Truth.* And ſoon after was Executed.

This Dying Criminal's Confeſſion confirm'd *Alanſon* that *Deidamia* had been Treacherouſly carried thither, either from his Houſe or the *Nunnery*; and he no longer Doubted that *Fronovius* and *Antonio* were the Perſons that had Hired Villians to Murther her; and therefore tho' they were removed from his Service ſome time ago, yet he was reſolved to purſue them, in order to bring them to Juſtice: But firſt he intended to make a freſh ſearch after *Deidamia*, the Criminal having given him account where ſhe eſcaped from them; and therefore he thought (if ſhe were ſtill Alive) ſhe might be ſomewhere in the Vicinity of that Wood: Towards that therefore he bended his Courſe, and being arrived within ſight thereof, and ſeeing how vaſt a thing it was, he perceived it would be a Difficult thing to find her, even tho' ſhe was there. Yet at his entering in, he conceived ſome Hopes in his Mind, that he ſhould not loſe his Labour. Whereupon alighting, and giving his Horſe to his Servant, (who had attended him in all his Melancholly Travails) and charged him to attend there till he came back, he went into the Wood alone, and found himſelf entangled amongſt Thickets, Briars, and Buſhes, yet ſtill he went on, ſearching every Cave and Solitary Place, often calling out, *Deidamia!* till Darkneſs coming on, made him think of Returning to his Man; but he found he was gone too far to Retreat back in time, and therefore reſolved to go forward: and being no doubt guided by Providence, he happened upon that Cave

Cave where *Deidamia* had ſo often bewailed his Abſence and Mourned her own Solitary State; and there he reſted his weary and tired Body for that Night, reſolving to purſue his Search the next Morning; which being come, juſt as he was going out of the Cave, he perceived ſomething ſparkle very Brightly on the Ground, which he ſtooped and took up, and looking on it in the open Light, he found it to be a Locket of Diamonds, which he had formerly given *Deidamia*; and ſhe unwittingly had dropt there. The finding of this, fill'd him with ſome Tranſports of Joy, as looking upon it as an Earneſt of his good Succeſs in finding the Owner. Thereupon he often repeated her Name very loud, but could receive no Anſwer but by ſome broken Eccho's. And therefore going on, he knew not whither, but being directed by the ſame Providence that had before Conducted him to the Cave, when he had wandered ſo far, that he was almoſt hopeleſs, he was ſuddenly ſet upon by two Whiffling Curs, which, upon offering to draw his Sword, ran away Barking from him; which he purſuing, came in a little time to a Path, where he might diſcern the Foot-ſteps of Human Creatures, which very much reviued his Hopes, and encouraged him ſtill to go on; he had not gone far before he diſcerned ſmoak to iſſue from a ſmall Cottage; to which, as he approached pretty near, he was again Saluted by the furious Barking of thoſe Dogs whom he had before purſued. This was the Cottage where *Deidamia* reſided, who upon the Barking of the Dogs, looking out to ſee what was the Matter, eſpied *Alanſon* coming towards her, and (the the Idea of his Image

mage being continually in her Breaſt) ſhe no ſooner Saw, but Knew him, and running into his Arms in an Exceſs of Joy, was only able to Cry out, *Ah! my Dear Lord*, Alanſon! But exceſs of Joy proves ſometimes Fatal, and it had like to have done ſo to *Deidamia*, for She immediately Swooned away in his Arms; The Dogs ſtill continued their Barking, which alſo cauſed the good Old Woman of the Cottage to ſee what the Cauſe was, and was extreamly Surprized to ſee a gentile Stranger there, and *Deidania* Fainting in his Arms; however ſhe made what haſte ſhe could to endeavour her Recovery, deſiring *Alanſon* to bring her into the Houſe, which he immediately did, telling the good Woman that he was *Deidamia*'s Husband; which ſhe (being very well acquainted with *Deidamia*'s Story) was very glad to hear. It was a conſiderable time before *Deidamia* could be brought to her Self, which ſo much afflicted the *Count*, that he was almoſt ready to Faint away himſelf. But his Lady being again recovered, *Alanſon* with a thouſand Kiſſes and endearing Expreſſions aſſured her of the Truth, Reality, and Conſtancy of his Affections towards her; whilſt ſhe on the other Hand, ſeemed to be the moſt Satisfied Creature in the World, in that ſhe had once more ſeen her deareſt Lord *Alanſon*; Deſiring him not to be troubled at her Fainting away, ſince it was only occaſioned by the exceſs of that Joy ſhe conceived in ſeeing him again; and that Death it ſelf would have been eaſie to her upon ſo happy an Occaſion, and eſpecially Dying in his Arms.

Whilſt in this manner they were expreſſing the Ardency of their Affections to each other, the good Man

Man of the Houſe came Home; and being told by his Wife that *Deidamia*'s Husband was there, he was over-joyed; and courteouſly Saluted *Alanſon*, telling him *He was ſure he was a Wellcome Man there to them all*, but eſpecially to *Deidamia*, who had long mourned his Abſence. *Alanſon* kindly Thanked him, and told him *He ſhould ever Honour him as the Refuge, and Preſerver of his dear Lady.* And after ſuch Civilities on each ſide paſſed, the good Woman ſet before him ſuch homely Refreſhment as ſhe had prepared on the Table: *Alanſon* eat but little, *Deidamia*'s Preſence being more to him than all the Dainties in the World; yet perceiving with what courſe Fare his Lady had been there Contented, he praiſed her Humility, and wonder'd at her Vertue. Dinner being ended, *Alanſon* was Concerned for his Servant, whom he had left in the entrance of the Wood, and would have gone back to him; but the good old Man would by no means let him, telling him he would go himſelf, becauſe he better knew the way, and could eaſier find it; and ſo taking his Dogs along with him, he went accordingly: The Man having waited at the enterance of the Wood, from the time that his Maſter went into it, till the next Morning, and hearing nothing of him, leaving his Horſes in the Fields adjoining to the Wood, reſolved to find him out, and having got a good Way, he met the Old Gentleman, who was coming to him; and enquiring of him for his Maſter, whom he deſcrib'd, he told him he had both ſeen and came from him, to Conduct him where he was, and that he had found his Lady; at this the Servant was very Glad, and Joyfully went along with him.

After

After the Old Gentleman was gone for the Servant the Count and his Lady went into the Woods, and there ſhe gave him a particular account of all her Sorrows and Sufferings ſince his departing from her. And the reaſon of her ſtaying where ſhe was; viz. *The Old Gentleman's not daring to go out of the Wood with her, he being a proſcrib'd Perſon; and to go without him was to endanger her own Life: Beſides, ſhe knew not how* Antonio *might have ordered matters, having the* Pretence *of Hereſie to lay to her Charge; and that hearing nothing of him in all this time, ſhe thought his Affections might have been Eſtranged from her.* But *Alanſon* aſſur'd her to the Contrary; telling her *He could not but Wonder at the unparallel'd Villany of* Fronovius *and* Antonio; *and that he had turn'd them out of his Service ſoon after he came home from the Camp.* After which the Old Gentleman and *Alanſon*'s Servant, being (as before related) arrived at the Cottage, the Evening was far Spent, and ſo they all betook themſelves to reſt.

The next Morning *Alanſon* was preparing for his return Home; but before they went, their aged Landlord would needs have them ſtay and Dine; and in Diſcourſe told him he was once a Tenant of his Fathers; but by cruel Edicts was forced not only to leave that Farm, but his Paternal Inheritance, ſuffering the Spoil and Loſs of all for the ſake of Chriſt and a good Conſcience; and in this Solitary Retirement had enjoyed more true Peace and Satisfaction, then in all the Pleaſure of his Forepaſt Life. The *Count* then ask'd him his Name; which he told him was *De La Mont*; upon which he preſently Knew and Embraced him, Saying,

That tho' himself was of the Roman *Perſwaſion*, yet he had often pitied his Sufferings, adding, *That it was given out he Died in Priſon.* The Pious *Deidamia* from this Diſcourſe took anoccaſion to ſay, *Ah! my deareſt Lord, You ſee what a Cruel and Mercileſs Religion it is that you Profeſs, and which thro' the goodneſs of God, I have lately departed from. I am not Surpriz'd* (ſaid *Alanſon*) *at that which you ſay, for I was inform'd in* Flanders *that you had chang'd your Religion. I wiſh to God,* (replyed *Deidamia*) *that your ſelf, my deareſt Lord, was likewiſe made a partaker of the ſame Happy Change.* Upon this Monſ. *De la Mont* put in, and laid down ſuch weighty Reaſons for the Truth of the Reformed Religion, and againſt the Errors of the Church of *Rome*, that it encouraged *Deidamia* further to go on, and ſhew the Viciouſneſs and Debauchery of the *Romiſh* Clergy, their bloody Principles and perſecuting Spirit; ſo that *Alanſon* was forced to Confeſs, That what was Alledged againſt their Practices was true; but as to their Principles (abating that of Perſecution) he believed they might be miſtaken: Upon which *Deidamia* Replyed, *I am glad, my dear Lord, to find you are againſt Perſecution; I hope then you will be willing I ſhall enjoy the Liberty of my Conſcience (the only Happineſs I have had in this Solitary Retirement) and that you will never go about to Compel me to go to* Maſs, *which I will rather Chuſe to Dye than do:* To this *Alanſon* replyed *That he was no ſuch Bigot as to think that thoſe that ſincerely worſhipped God, according to the beſt of their Underſtandings, (as he was Confident* Deidamia *did) might not be accepted of him, tho of an Opinion different from himſelf: And as to Compel her to go to* Maſs, *if by Arguments*

Arguments he could not Perſwade her to it, he ſolemnly Promiſed he never would uſe any other Means.

And being now ready to Depart, *Alanſon* offered *La Mont* ſtore of Gold for their Kindneſs to his Lady while ſhe had been with them, which he abſolutely Refuſed, ſaying, *Her Converſation had been ſo agreeable, that they were the Perſons who had been Obliged.* So that leave being taken, and *La Mont* Praying that God would go along with them, and make their Way Proſperous, they parted, and coming out of the Wood, the Servant readily found the Horſes; and *Deidamia* getting up behind her Lord, they made the beſt of their Way towards *Alanſon*'s Houſe; Where they were received with the rejoycing of all their Acquaintance; and much more of her Parents, to whom in a Day or two they made a Viſit, *Deidamia* being received by them as one riſen from the Dead. And the Story of their Daughters Troubles being all Related to them, they could not but admire the Providence of God, in preſerving her, and wonder at the monſtrous Wickedneſs of *Fronovius* and *Antonio*: Who upon their hearing of the Confeſſion of the Dying Criminal, had withdrawn themſelves from their former Reſidences. And *Antonio* (the better to eſcape deſerved Puniſhment for this Luſtful Attempts upon *Deidamia*'s Chaſtity) went privately to the Biſhop of *Rheims*, and told him that Count *Alanſon*'s Lady was Depraved with *Hereſie*, in which ſhe was ſo much Countenanced by her Lord, that himſelf for endeavouring to Reclaim her, was turn'd out of the Family, and cut off from all Intereſt in it, and therefore came humbly to beg his Protection againſt ſo powerful an Adverſary, ſince

what he had done was only out of Zeal to promote the *Catholik Religion.* The Biſhop received him into his Protection, and Writ a ſharp Letter to the *Count* about it; who having received it, believed it was done by the inſtigation of *Antonio*, whom he heard he had entertain'd; And being troubled that ſo great a Villane ſhould find any Countenance from the Biſhop, he Writ back again to know the Names of thoſe that had ſo Injuriouſly inform'd him againſt his Lady: But the Biſhop would not gratifie him ſo far in his Deſires. This made the *Count* return him a ſecond Letter, written in a more Angry Stile; Declaring, *That if he could not have Juſtice from him, the King himſelf ſhould be acquainted with it, and by him he would ſeek Redreſs.* This ſo Nettled the Biſhop, that he ſent Examiners to his Lady, to Interrogate her about her Religion; of which the *Count* having ſome Intimation, ſent her to her Parents; who were extreamly Troubled at theſe freſh Misfortunes; and being mightily Scandaliz'd at the Villany of *Antonio*; and the Biſhop's protecting him from Juſtice, grew thereupon very cold in the Profeſſion of the *Popiſh* Religion, which ſo furiouſly Perſecuted Innocence and Vertue, and Countenanced the greateſt Wickedneſs: This the Pious *Deidamia* Wiſely Improved, and ſo Effectually wrought with them, by her Warm and Zealous Diſcourſes, that through the Operation of God's Holy Spirit aſſiſting her, they were both brought over to the Embracing of the Truth.

The Biſhops Examiners being diſapointed, return'd back without their Errand; upon which the Biſhop threatned to Excommunicate both *Alanſon*

lanſon and his Family; and was ſoon after as good as his Word. Upon this *Alanſon* Poſts away to the King, who was then at *Marli*, where he Complained of the Injury done him, by the Biſhop of *Rheims*, both in Excommunicating him, and Protecting a Villanous Criminal from Juſtice. But it ſeems the Biſhop had been before-hand with him, and made his Complaint firſt: For the King receiv'd him very Coldly, and told him, *The Biſhop of* Rheims *was a good Man, and he had left the Buſineſs wholly to him.* On which *Alanſon* return'd Home much Diſcontented, and found that in his Abſence freſh Search had been made in his Houſe for his Lady, tho' without Succeſs. Then he went to the Biſhop himſelf, and boldly Charged him with *Enteraining a wicked Perſon, to the prejudice of his Honour*; telling him who he was, and declaring his Crimes, deſiring he might be brought forth, and his Lady ſhould appear. But the Biſhop refuſing this, and telling him *His Lady was accuſed of Hereſie, and he of Countenancing it*; the *Count* in a kind of holy *Anger* told him, *That Religion could not be of God, which encouraged Villany, an ſought the Deſtruction of them that were Vertuous.* At this the Biſhop Storm'd, and told him *He ſhould be anſwered in another Nature.* And ſoon after he had ſecret Notice from Court, *That upon a freſh Complaint of the Biſhops, both he and his Lady were proſcrib'd as Hugonots; and that notwithſtanding his Friends Interceſſion, and his own former Merits, his Places were taken away, and his Eſtate ordered to be Seized, as a Terror to others.* *Alanſon* finding himſelf unable to withſtand this Storm, pack'd up the Richeſt of his Effects, and privately ſent them to his Wives

Father, where ſhe was all this while Concealed, and then followed after himſelf. Where having declared the great Injuſtice he had met withal, contrary to all Religion, Honour, Honeſty, and Conſcience. He had told his Relations he was Reſolved, by God's Help, to embrace that *Religion* for which he had been a Sufferer before he was a Profeſſor; *For that Religion could not be of God, that did ſo Evidently ſet up the Kingdom of the Devil.* At which they all Rejoyced, and *Deidamia* more eſpecially; who paſſionately Embracing him ſaid, *Her Father and Mother were of the ſame mind with him*; at which *Alanſon* was the more Encouraged. But leaſt their Adverſaries ſhould come thither to Search for them, they withdrew into a ſmall Village, and Lived obſcurely, while *Montaign* could hear of a convenient Veſſel to Tranſport them into a Countrey where they might enjoy more Liberty.

You have before heard how *Bernard* the Gardener was Sold to a Maſter of a Ship belonging to one of the *French* Plantations in the *Weſt-Indies*; Before we Conclude we will briefly ſhow how God's Providence watched over him for Good alſo. In his Voyage at Sea they met with ſo extraordinary a Storm, that all expected preſent Death; but *Bernard* was very Calm, puting up his Fervent Prayer to Almighty God, which was followed by a very great Serenity and Calmneſs. This made the Maſter have a Reſpect for him, and oftentimes Diſcourſed with him; his Behaviour being always Sober, and his Diſcourſe Savoury. *The Maſter having made his Voyage, Sold* Bernard *for a Slave; and having ſtaid there about two Months, return'd again to* France; *but the Diſcourſes and Behaviour of* Bernard

Bernard *had made ſo deep an Impreſſion in his Mind, that he was greatly Troubled for having Sold him, inſomuch that he could take no Reſt, untill he had taken a ſolemn Reſolution the next Voyage he made, to bring him back; and accordingly the next Year making another Voyage thither, he made it his Buſineſs to enquire after him, and having found him, ask'd if he was Willing to have his Liberty, and return to his own Countrey?* Bernard *Replied, He never was in Love with Slavery; but was Contented under it, whilſt God's Providence ordered it ſo; but if he might have his Liberty, he would Chooſe it rather. Whereupon the Maſter paid his Ranſom, and brought him back to* France; *nor was he a loſer by it, for as a Recompenſe for his Kindneſs, it pleaſed God to make* Bernard *an Inſtrument to open his Eyes, and bring him to acknowledgment of the Truth.* Bernard *being got again into his own Country, made it his Buſineſs to enquire after the Welfare of* Alanſon's *Family, and being told of the Sufferings that had lately befallen them, he was extreamly Grieved, tho' at the ſame time he could not but Rejoyce that they Suffered in ſo good a Cauſe. And ſpeaking of them to ſome of his Old Chriſtian Friends; he was told by one of them, That both the* Count *and his Lady liv'd Obſcurely and in Diſguiſe, in the Neighbouring Village; and that if he had a mind to ſee them, he would give him a Note to the Gentleman of the Houſe, upon which he ſhould have admittance to them; or otherwiſe they would not be Spoken with by any one. Bernard* gladly accepted of his Friends Kindneſs; and ſtraight went to the Houſe; and delivered the Gentleman the *Note*, the Purport of which was, *That he had known the Bearer many Years for a faithful Friend and Brother; and that he had*

had been formerly a Servant of the Count Alanſon's *and had a great Deſire to ſee his Lady, which he might Safely let him do.* Upon reading this *Note*, the Gentleman deſir'd him to come in, and ſent up one of his Servants to acquaint *Deidamia* there was one below deſired to Speak with her; upon which *Bernard* was preſently call'd up; *Deidamia* was mightily Surpriz'd to ſee *Bernard*, whom ſhe thought ſhe ſhould have never ſeen more, and very much rejoyced at it; introducing him to her Lord, and afterwards to her Parents, who all made very much of him; and were Glad to ſee him. And having communicated the Various Providences of God to one another ſince they had been parted, they all bleſſed the Lord *For his Goodneſs, and for his Wonderful Works to the Children of Men.* And afterward Conſulting how to procure a Veſſel to Convey them out of Danger, *Bernard* gave them an Account that the Maſter of the Veſſel which brought him back to *France*, was alſo Converted; and that now his Veſſel lay ready to Sail for *Denmark*; and he was ſure he would be glad to Serve them. To this they all Agreed; and thereupon *Bernard* went immediately to the Maſter of the Ship, who readily conſented to carry them, and Ordered their Goods to be brought Preſently, and themſelves to come Aboard at Midnight; at which time *Bernard* Conducted them to the Ship, and then went Aboard with them in quality of their Servant; and ſoon after, the Wind ſerving, they ſet Sail for *Denmark*; where being Arrived, and tarrying a few Days, they hired a *Dutch* Veſſel to carry them to *Rotterdam*, and from thence they went by Boat to *Utrecht*; which being a pleaſant Place,

and

and of a very good Air, they reſolved there to Settle.

Thus, *Courteous Reader*, thou haſt had a brief but True, Relation of the Mercy and Goodneſs of God to that Noble Family which is the Subject of this Narrative: And he that Reads it throughout ſeriouſly, will find Cauſe to make the ſame Obſervation that *David* did of Old, *Mark the Perfect Man, and behold the Upright, for the End of that Man is Peace.* Which the Apoſtle St. *James* further Exemplifies in his Epiſtle, *You have heard of the Patience of* Job, *and have ſeen the End of the Lord, how he is very Pitiful and of tender Mercy.* Here you have ſeen the great Diſtreſs of *Deidamia*, and here you have ſeen the Goodneſs of God in her Deliverance. Here you have the Count *Alanſon* Rifled and Spoil'd of his Eſtate and Poſſeſſion; And here you have ſeen how God has Graciouſly made it up, in giving him that Faith which is far more Precious than the Gold which Periſheth.

But I cannot Conclude without giving you an Account of the Judgments of God upon Fronovius *and* Antonio, *that others may Fear, and give Glory to God.*

Fronovius after the Seizure of *Alanſon*'s Eſtate, and his Departure into *Holland*, return'd into thoſe Parts, but finding himſelf Hated by all Men for his Villany, he retired into *Normandy*, where Soliciting his Landlord's Daughter to yield to his Luſt, and ſhe refuſing it, he took an Opportunity to *Raviſh* her, for which he was Hang'd without the Gates of *Roan*.

And as for *Antonio*, tho' he eſcaped the Juſtice of Man, he could not eſcape the Judgments of God, for falling Diſtracted in a little time after, he Confeſs'd

feſs'd it was God's Judgment upon him for the Miſchief he had wrought againſt his Lord *Alanſon*, and his Vertuous Lady; Saying, *They had taken a way to be Saved, but he was ſure to be Damned*; and ſo Daſhing out his own Brains againſt a Wall, he Died Miſerably. Both of them Verifying the Words of the Inſpired Pen-Man, *Is not Deſtruction to the Wicked, and a ſtrange Puniſhment to the Workers of Iniquity?*

A Brief Account of the Preſent Perſecution of the French Proteſtants.

THe reſtleſs Malice of the Great Enemy of Mankind againſt the Church of God, has been ſufficiently manifeſted in all Ages of the World; and began to Exert it ſelf firſt of all in *Cain*, who kill'd his Brother *Abel*, becauſe his own Deeds were Wicked, and his Brothers Righteous, as the holy Scriptures inform us: And it has been his frequent Practice, when he could not withdraw the People of God from the Profeſſion of the Truth by the Bait of Worldly Advantage, to raiſe a Flood of Perſecution againſt 'em, by that means to Extirpate them, if it were poſſible, out of the Earth. Of which no People in *Europe* has in this Age had more fatal Experience than the Poor Proteſtants in *France*, who have been ſo barbarouſly uſed by the Blood thirſty Papiſts there, that a True Account of their Sufferings will appear to the next Age rather like Romantick Fictions, than (as indeed they are) Realities. And there are two things

things in it that appear alike Admirable; and that is, The Barbarous Rage and Cruelty of the Perſecutors, and the Invincible Courage and Conſtancy of the Poor Sufferers, who are ſo mightily ſupported by the Divine Grace, that they not only triumph over all their Tortures, but ſuffer joyfully the loſs of all, as knowing that they have in Heaven a better and a more induring Subſtance. — But I will recite briefly ſome Inſtances of their Sufferings.

Some they Condemn to the Gallies, where they are Coupled commonly with the Vileſt Miſcreants, Condemned thither for the moſt flagitious Crimes, whoſe fearful Oaths and Execrations are continually wounding of their Pious Ears: There is generally five of them plac'd upon every Form, fetterd with a heavy Chain of about ten or twelve foot long: They Shave their heads, from time to time, to ſhew they are Slaves, and are not allow'd to wear either Hatts or Perriwigs: They have only Beans, and nothing elſe for their Food, with about fourteen Ounces of Courſe Bread a day, and no Wine at all. They are devour'd in Winter by Lice, and in the Summer by Buggs and Flies; and forced to lie upon one another, as Hogs in a Sty: And every day are threatn'd and tormented by *Friars* and *Prieſts*, who not being able to convince them by reaſon, think to do it by Severity.

Some they put in Priſon, and keep them in naſty Dungeons and Holes, full of Mire and Dirt, without any Bed, or ſo much as Straw to lie upon, and not ſuffered to have the leaſt glimmering of the Sun, or the light of a Candle. And allow'd ſo

ſmall

ſmall a quantity of Victuals as is hardly ſufficient to keep them alive. In this miſerable Caſe, without any to pity 'em, ſome have been kept above a Year together. One of them being viſited after a Twelve-months Impriſonment in this manner, by one called a Director of Conſcience, juſt as they were going to bring him his ſmall allowance, he cou'd not forbear crying out, as ſoon as he ſaw him, *Lord in what a Condition are you, Sir!* To which the poor Sufferer reply'd with a Chriſtian Fortitude, worthy of the Cauſe he ſuffer'd for, *Cou'd you but ſee the Secret Pleaſure my heart Experiences, you wou'd think me too happy.* The Prieſt told him, *The greateſt Sufferings did not intitle to the Glory of Martyrdom, unleſs he ſuffer'd for Truth and Juſtice.* To this the Poor Priſoner reply'd, *He grante it; but that that was his Caſe, the Holy Ghoſt had ſeal'd to his heart, that the very thought thereof ſupported him in the midſt of all his Afflictions:* This perſon has through Gods Providence been ſince deliver'd; and has declar'd, that the Conſolations that God out of his infinite Love, afforded to him, were ſo great, that he little regarded the Miſeries he was reduc'd to, tho he continued in that lamentable Condition about two and twenty Months, without changing his Cloaths, till his Beard was grown as long as the Hair of his Head, and his Face as pale as a Plaiſter'd Wall; who declared alſo that when he was deliver'd, the Number of thoſe chain'd to the Gallies for the ſake of Religion, was about 370, who glorify'd GOD in their Sufferings, with Unparallell'd Courage and Conſtan[illegible]

FINIS.